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The Writer's Monthly

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JANUARY, 1927

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The Home Correspondence School
Springfield, Mass.

The Writer's Monthly

A Journal for All Who Write

Volume XXIX JANUARY, 1927 Number 1

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The Writer's Monthly

14 Feb. 1931

Selling to the Public

Epes W. Sargent

A Valuable Practical Lesson for Story Writers Based on the Principles of Salesmanship

SO MUCH has been written about selling stories to editors that many authors seem to have forgotten that the public is the ultimate consumer. Of course the editor is buying what he thinks the public wants, so if you sell to the editor you presumably are pleasing at least his particular public, but if you were to think more directly in terms of the public, it is possible that you would find it easier to sell to the editor.

By writing to please the public you are thinking from the editorial viewpoint—which may not be precisely the point of view of the author who writes for the editor. The editor is buying from the public angle, so why not write your stories in that way?

Here, let us say, is the gist of an idea. You have written the story. It is a good story. You know the editor should appreciate it. Perhaps he does, and yet the story comes back. Why? Because you have not practised the tricks of the retail trade.

Suppose you take that same story from the retail angle. What's the matter with it? If it is good, why didn't it sell? And the answer probably is that you have not sold it to the public.

And yet doubtless you have picked up more than one magazine, read the first two or three paragraphs of a story, decided you did not like it, and have gone on to the next title. Perhaps the editor of that magazine took the story because of its excellence, although it did not sell itself to the reader. Perhaps he ran it because it was such a corking good story after the first page or two that he took a chance on it.

And yet, had that story been

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written from the reader-angle, the chances are that the treatment would have been different.

The coal dealer does not shoot five or ten tons of coal into your cellar and then come around and ask you if you want to buy it. No grocer would deposit an assorted order on your back steps and then ask you if that was what you wanted. The coal man would call you up and ask if you had your winter supply, suggesting that he had a fresh lot of good coal in and pointing out that if you acted early you would avoid the October rush. The grocer might call with some suggestions, but he would get your order before delivery. That's retail selling.

And the wise author will sell his reader-prospect before he starts to deliver the goods. He can't sell a man along in the middle of a story. This must be done in the first two or three paragraphs. Unless you are so well known that magazine readers are assured by your name that the story will be a good one, you'll have to sell in the first two or three paragraphs. You can't open with a long description of the Bay of Naples and then tell your story after you have given a page or two of guide-book stuff. You'll be more likely to sell your reader if your hero remarks in the opening paragraph that he would swap the entire town for a ham sandwich. The reader will want to know why he feels that way about it, and will read on. Put a "punch" in the first few paragraphs and you can follow with a page or two from Baedecker, if you must, assured that your reader will hold on until he finds out whether or not the hero achieved the sandwich.

Your lead is so important, particularly in a short-story, that it will pay you to work over the opening until you have it just right. Often the "just right" lead will write the rest of the story for you. Sometimes it is better to write the story first and then take a few extra days to polish up the lead. There is no hard and fast rule. It all depends on how the story comes. Once I did 20,000 words in five days, and then spent two weeks getting the first half of Chapter I just right. Another time I let a story simmer for more than a month until the lead came. It hit me one evening as I was playing solitaire. I went straight to the typing machine and wrote the first chapter. In the next few days I did the remainder of 30,000 words and I got a check ten days after the story reached its first port of call.

If you have a story that is fairly bubbling out of your brain, don't wait for a good lead. Get it down as it comes—but don't send it out until you are certain that it is going to sell—to the public—in its first few lines.

An editor may read your story all the way through, but unless it hits him at the start, he is going to be very careful about sending the acceptance slip. It may be so good that he'll ask you to rewrite the opening, but it saves time and postage to anticipate this request.

If you suddenly walk up to your

pet enemy and biff him between the eyes, you have him half "licked." Gene Tunney credits one stiff wallop in the first round with really beating Jack Dempsey. Dempsey was not looking for action so early in the battle, and he never got over his surprise.

If Tunney had "stalled" in the first two or three rounds, he probably would have lost the decision.

It's the same way in "licking" the reader into going through your story. Hit him a wallop in the first paragraph and he'll go through to the end; but hem and haw and he'll figure that you got into the magazine by mistake.

Compare these two openings in a recent magazine:

"It was not yet eight o'clock in the morning, but in the study opening off the living room a man, young and tall, was playing the violin—a silver witchery of sound, a broken rainbow of notes, that lilted through the house like children playing in the sun."

"Ever so informal was the first meeting. He had been about to sink for the twenty-second and probably the last time—he had been counting these submersions with automatic precision and was characteristically if incongruously pleased with having bettered by what might be called drowning in who was known to her circle as par by a sweet nineteen—when she Nicky Frye swam into his life."

Which of those two leads would attract the average reader the more? As a writer, you might appreciate the "silver witchery" and "broken rainbow of notes", but you're in a mighty small minority compared to the average magazine reader, and the latter would want to know more about the man who broke all literary traditions by coming up after the usually fatal third. That's salesmanship to the public.

The probabilities are that the second lead sold itself to the editor at sight. And there is an equal probability that he read the other story several times before he finally decided to take a chance on it.

Why not reduce your postage bills by holding your stories a little longer and taking time to fix them up for the retail trade?

Luck

Luck means rising at 6 o'clock in the morning, living on a dollar a day if you earn two, minding your own business, and not meddling with other people's. Luck means opportunities you have never failed to keep—trains you have never failed to catch. Luck means trusting in God and your own resourcefulness. The only good substitute for luck is work.—*Pelican Clubs News.*

As a Magazine Grows Older

L. E. Eubanks

Are You Asleep and Content or Are You Progressing with the Magazines for Which You Write?

"WHAT in the world has come over the Youth's Companion?" lamented a brother writer. "Years ago I sold them articles frequently, but now they return everything. I believe I'm just as good a writer as I was, or better. What's wrong?"

Many, many writers have had similar experiences, not only with the Companion but with scores of other magazines. And the explanation does not necessarily lie in a falling-off of the writer's ability; usually it is in the changing requirements of the periodical. If you expect to be a "regular contributor" to a magazine—to begin with it and appear in practically every issue as long as you both do live—you will have to keep up with it in the development of your subjects. Not to deteriorate is not enough; you must change and progress as it does, even foreseeing the changes, when that is possible, and altering your policies accordingly.

A magazine is much like other business ventures; it begins with a small subscription list and a few writers. The number of readers is small and their comments and criticisms not hard to handle. If you have "gotten in on the ground floor", as a contributor you get along admirably, for there are only a few of you—and not much competition.

But conditions change rapidly. It is that magazine's business to grow, not merely provide its writers with a monthly pension. Very soon there are five or ten men on the job you held alone at first—that is, they are submitting stories or articles similar to yours, and just as good.

The trouble for you doesn't end there. Along comes the chap with a new idea, an article on a subject within the magazine's field but hitherto untouched. He is a "discovery" and room has to be made for him, thus lessening your chances still further by curtailing the space for articles.

About the next step is an enlargement of the magazine; but this helps you only temporarily, for the evidence of prosperity and the better rates offered attract still more able writers, and pretty soon you are being dropped out—literally crowded out—more and more frequently.

Recourse to enlargement cannot go on long with a periodical. There comes a time when more bulk

would be impracticable; and then begins the real battle, in which only the fittest survive.

Unless our hypothetical writer has some fighting spirit he is now done with that magazine. If you have been in such a position and let discouragement and pessimism govern your course, you know how little good it did. "I helped them make the magazine, now they've dropped me!" may sound good to you, but it does not get you anywhere. And down in your heart you know that you should say "They outgrew me." The same law is operative now as at the beginning; the editor always chooses the best—for his purposes—but competition has raised the quality of the submitted matter, and your offerings have not improved sufficiently to be still the best, according to his standards—and they are the only ones that govern the decisions.

Instead of giving up, set your jaw and determine not to be crowded out. Effort wins, and even if you do not find your name on the contents page of every issue, you will succeed a part of the time. And the best feature of this plan is that the articles or stories that come back from the old market will be good enough to stand a chance elsewhere, whereas to confess your self whipped inevitably and immediately lowers the quality of your output. It is not often that a story lands higher than our aim; and the best way to be faster than the average is to run against the best.

In writing articles for a magazine with which I have had no acquaintance, one of my first reflections pertains to its age. If a periodical is as old as Youth's Companion it is a waste of time to send it anything on hackneyed subjects. Even if you had never before seen this magazine its age would make you safe in assuming that all the most common subjects of interest to boys had been played up.

On the other hand, there are always some subjects that are new. I strike these if I can; but dependence on them alone would mean a small output. There is a big middle class of material—subjects that have been treated in the magazine but upon which other acceptable things remain to be said.

Naturally, that is the class from which most of us choose, and the freshness of aspect rather than actual newness is the determining factor. Theoretically, no subject is ever worked out, but in effect a subject has been exhausted for a writer unless he knows it well enough to begin where the other writers have left off. Etude is the oldest magazine of its kind in America. I doubt that the editor even reads such offerings as "Educational Value of Music", "Music in the Home", "History of Music", because those themes were virtually worked out years and years ago. I have sold such articles to comparatively new magazines, but to Etude I sent such articles as "The Violinist's Thumb", "Individual String Study", "Finger Control", and the like, making them just as specific as I possibly could.

Concreteness sold these articles. To send an old magazine *general* treatments of their subject is usually hopeless; as the editor of Physical Culture once remarked in a letter to me, "The essay is about as popular as a skunk at a lawn party." Naturally, this magazine has, in the twenty-five or thirty years of its life, thrashed out matters of exercise and physical proportions pretty thoroughly; most articles dealing with those themes *generally* would come back; but I "rang the bell" with a paper on "The Thin Face". Concreteness again.

I could give many more similar instances, proving the wisdom of reflection on a magazine's age before writing it. A fiction magazine has a broad field, but in dealing with articles on a subject that at best cannot be greatly amplified, it does not take long to exhaust the abstract phases. Ten years ago I sold articles to Field and Stream that could not possibly get a hearing now. At that time, "How to Care for a Gun" brought a check, but a year or two ago I had all I could do to land with a discussion on so narrow and concrete a theme as "Rusty Barrels".

The successful writer of articles will find it highly helpful—if not absolutely necessary—to aim at the concrete, to practice at dividing, sub-dividing and analyzing his subjects from every possible angle. In that way he will grow with the periodical, for every editor strives to give increasingly specific material to his readers as his periodical grows in strength and popularity.

As I have argued in other papers, helpfulness in an article appeals to all editors; and the older a periodical becomes the more is expected of it in this way. For a magazine like Farm Journal at this stage of its existence to revert to abstract discussions of farming, essays on nature, etc., would be a step backward, and would be quickly resented by those thousands of practical farmers who have learned to rely on that paper for help. What they want is not generalities and platitudes in flowery language, but plainly-written instructions on how to build a better fence, or raise a calf at less expense. All article-magazines develop, perforce, from the abstract to the concrete, and we writers of articles must progress with them.

There seems to be a constant decay of all our ideas; even of those which are struck deepest, and in minds the most retentive, so that if they be not sometimes renewed by repeated exercises of the senses, or reflection on those kinds of objects which at first occasioned them, the print wears out, and at last there remains nothing to be seen.—JOHN LOCKE, *Human Understanding.*

An Untilled Field

Arthur A. Young

Specialization Rather Than Generalization Is the Keynote of Success In Writing Agricultural Material for the Press, as Told In An Interview With Frank Ridgway

SPECIALIZATION is the bedrock on which successful free-lancing is built. What phase of agricultural writing offers the greatest opportunity for the free-lance?

I asked Frank Ridgway, Agricultural Editor of the Chicago Tribune, whose writings are read by more than three million people daily, to tell me what phase of agricultural writing offers the greatest market for the outsider. Mr. Ridgway has contributed to Farm and Fireside, Farm Mechanics, Popular Mechanics, and many other farm papers, besides his syndicate work on the Chicago Tribune.

"The most potential market, as I see it," declared Mr. Ridgway, "is with the national publications. Free-lancers have not yet discovered this market, but the demand for agricultural articles that will nationally appeal to leaders is there.

"Readers are demanding agricultural 'stories.' In my daily talks with industrial giants I find that agriculture is absorbing their attention. They are willing to sit down and tell me all I want to know about agriculture and its effect on business. They are teeming with 'stories.' This evident interest means that editors must use more and more agricultural 'stories' in the future.

"A decade or so ago, agriculture was written up from the production standpoint. Today the marketing end is even more important. This presents a second opportunity for the young writer—agricultural journalism in metropolitan papers. City newspapers are printing agricultural material more than ever, and prominent space is given to it. To the casual reader, this may not appear to be true, because the stuff is not grouped, but if you were to gather it you would be surprised at the amount it would make.

"This fact makes agricultural writing a profitable line in which to specialize. There is not a big city paper in the country that cannot make good use of an agricultural editor. The shift in interest in agriculture from coun-

try to city makes this need imminent."

Mr. Ridgway was a farm boy who combined agriculture and journalism in his college work. He told how he got started in these joint fields.

"One day when I was an agricultural student at the University of Missouri I called at Dean William's office," said Mr. Ridgway. "I told the Dean of my idea of combining journalism with agriculture. I had discovered that much of what was then written about agriculture was so technical that very few readers were able to understand it. Even the farmers for whom the subject matter was to be of interest were unable to interpret it.

"Dean William said, 'That's a good idea. Few journalists know agriculture and few agriculturists know journalism.'

"I took all the journalism courses I could, and got a job on the Daily Grovers' Journal Then I went to the Chicago Tribune. They had no agricultural editor at that time—I had to create one. I tried to translate the technical matter of the scientist into understandable language for the average farmer, and I have been doing so ever since."

To make money in agricultural writing it is necessary to take into account the shift in agricultural interest. Every free-lancer knows that "landing" in the agricultural papers is not an easy task. The reason for this is that farm bureaus, county agents, experiment stations at universities, state and federal departments of agriculture, all experts in their lines, have quantities of free material which they wish to appear in print. The free-lancer stumbles against this competition and wonders what is the matter with his stuff.

"There's nothing the matter with his stuff," said Mr. Ridgway, when I mentioned this fact. "It is just a question of supply and demand, and the writer must adjust himself to conditions. That is why I recommend these two fields—the nationally-read magazines and the agricultural departments of city papers. In both, the material must not be too technical to 'get over' quickly; it should deal with the production side of the agricultural question, the problems of the consumer, the marketer, the business man in a big, national way. It must be handled in such a way as to appeal to city readers as well as to the farmers.

" 'How does the farm affect the stock exchange, legislation, Congress?' you ask. Not long ago I wrote a series of articles on farm losses, and there was no difficulty in selling it to a string of newspapers all over the country, because the question of losses affects every interest, large and small.

"To give you an idea of the importance of agriculture in the public eyes today, let me remind you that President Coolidge came to Chicago to talk before the American Farm Bureau Federation. Two years ago Georges

Clemenceau, 'the Tiger of France,' also came to Chicago—and spoke about agriculture.

"I think that the agricultural department of a city paper has the greatest future of all departments. I never go around apologizing for my job. My work is just as important as that of any other department, because it interests business men who are working to help agriculture, not in a patriotic way, but as a means of improving their own business conditions.

"The work has variety, which is not true of all kinds of specialized journalism. For instance, I sit next to the music editor in the Chicago Tribune office. It must certainly be tiresome for him to pound away day after day at personals. One day I am interviewing the President, the next day a senator, a third day a horticultural expert. When I am tired of hogs I turn to markets, and from markets to legislation. I have just returned from an all-summer tour of the northwestern grain states and the three big grain provinces of Canada.

"There is no limit of interest in agriculture, since it includes all sciences and is closely interwoven with every phase of business."

Mr. Ridgway told what he keeps in mind when composing.

"I always picture a suburban reader," said the agricultural editor of the Chicago Tribune. "I write as simply as possible, since most of what I write will be read by untrained people. I translate the technical into A. B. C. of English.

"I do not know everything about agriculture, but I try to find men who are specialists and can answer questions definitely and accurately. The same must be true of every writer who wants to succeed in agricultural journalism."

Mr. Ridgway said that he used to receive in the Tribune office a large number of manuscripts, but, as he had to rewrite everything submitted, he discouraged their submission. He gets more material than he can use from "regular" sources. Therefore the big newspapers offer little or no market for the free-lance, according to Mr. Ridgway, except as it provides an opening to become an agricultural editor on a metropolitan newspaper.

"Here," emphasized Mr. Ridgway, "is a real opportunity for young writers."

Knowledge is of two kinds: We know a subject, or we know where we can find information upon it.—SAMUEL JOHNSON.

Behind the Scenes With the Dramatic Critic

R. Addison Adams

PART 1

Those Who are On the Outside Looking In Always Find a Peculiar Fascination in Learning How the Wheels Go 'Round

IT SEEMS to be the opinion of most people, both inside and outside the newspaper profession, that one of the easiest and pleasantest jobs in the world is that held by the dramatic critic. Everyone likes to go to the theatre, and the professional critic of plays is pointed out as a man who not only can "go for nothing to every show that comes along," but who also gets paid for going! What kind of work imaginable could be pleasanter than that?

It must be admitted that it does look that way on the surface, but those who have been behind the scenes have been speedily disillusioned. They find that this job of being a dramatic critic is not such an easy one after all. If the critic happens to be a good one, and actually knows something about the theater, he has reached his present position only by years of study and the hardest kind of work, and holds it only by the exercise of the highest degree of diplomacy.

In the first place, a person who desires to be a dramatic critic must love the theater. Those critics who say they detest the theater and who sit through a show with a constantly bored expression are not good critics. They may be filling their positions satisfactorily to their publishers, but they are not playing fair with either actors or readers.

People go to the theater to be entertained. They go because they like to go and because they are hoping to receive their money's worth in theater fare. They do not go expecting to be bored half to death and ready to resent having to admit they were entertained by the performance. Therefore the man or woman who, as a critic, goes professionally to observe the show and make an accurate report to the thousands of readers of his paper on the merits of the bill, should be like the majority of the audience—ready to accept the entertainment with the heartiest spirit if the entertainment is really there.

Alexander Woollcott, of the New York World, claims to be the only dramatic critic who likes the

theater. Of course that is an exaggeration, but it is a sign of the deplorable condition many dramatic departments are in that such a statement should have any particle of truth.

Then, too, if a person detests the theater and has always detested the theater, he has not taken advantage of the opportunities he has had before becoming a critic to "take in every show" he could possibly get to. A person who wants to be a dramatic critic cannot start going regularly to the theater, too early in life. Each year or two sees the disappearance forever of some figure or other that has dominated the American stage for many years. For instance, Robert Mantell, whose Shakespearian repertoire has been enjoyed for fifty years, is making his farewell tour. If you have not seen him how will you judge future Shakespearian actors by those that have gone before?

Before a critic enters the dramatic department of a newspaper he should have had a solid ground work of not less than ten years of observation of the stage and its players. It would be impossible, of course, to go to all the performances that come along, but the best should be chosen, even if it is necessary to sit in the uttermost reaches of the gallery. Seats there are not half bad, as I often found during my younger years.

The stage should be studied not only from "out front," but an acquaintanceship should be struck up with the manager or some other person in authority who will let you go behind the scenes to see what makes the wheels go 'round, how thunder and lightning are made, what causes the snow to fall, how scenes are shifted during a performance, and all the host of other details of stage management that mean so much to a dramatic or musical production.

All through these formative years the future critic should read the various magazines devoted to the theater. Billboard, Variety, The Theater Magazine, two or three of the photoplay magazines, and some of the trade journals dealing with both stage and screen, should be read. These will acquaint him with the mechanics of the theater and with the history and traditions of plays and players.

Opportunities should be sought to take part in amateur theatricals. If you can work a few times as supernumerary with the local stock company, that will help. The money you get for it will not add much to your bank account, but the experience cannot be bought at any price. In after years whenever witnessing a play you will know exactly how it is all done and will thus have the advantage of the great majority of those who read your criticisms. A critic is always supposed to know more than the rest of the audience. This business of dramatic criticism is his profession, and he must be a specialist on the drama, just as a doctor must know more about medicine and a lawyer more about law than does the general public. Each has studied his subject for years and thus can speak authoritatively on his chosen subject.

No, a dramatic critic is not made over night, although some newspaper publishers throughout the country seem to think he is. Many of them share the same view as many of the public—that "anybody" can write a dramatic review. They are thus inclined to treat the dramatic department less seriously than they should and turn this important position over to some pensioner, a man who has done faithful work in some other department but who is no longer fitted for the place. He may never have cared about the theater, and it is mainly in this way that the theaters and the public have thrust upon them men who are not in sympathy with the theater and therefore cannot and will not write accurate and fair reviews.

The dramatic critic in order to cover the legitimate theater should be able to recognize at once, and differentiate between, straight drama, comedy drama, tragedy, melodrama, high comedy, low comedy, and farce. The dividing line is sometimes very faint and some plays will have a bit of two or three different forms, but there is always one type that predominates, and the critic must be able to pick that form out and by it label the play.

In musical comedy he must be able to recognize immediately the different types of voice; bass, baritone, tenor, counter-tenor, coloratura soprano, soprano, mezzo-soprano, contralto and all the rest. He must be able to tell whether a singer has a cold or simply cannot sing or is stage-frightened.

In reviewing vaudeville shows the depth of his knowledge is tested to the utmost. He must be familiar with the names and characteristics of the various kinds of acts, such as skit, sketch, two-act, monologue, boy-and-girl act, and so on. He must know the various kinds of dances—waltz, clogs, buck and wing, hard and soft shoe dances, acrobatic, aesthetic, eccentric, and a score more of different kinds.

He must know whether an act is playing in "one," "two," "three," or "full stage". He must understand the difference between the apron of the stage and the proscenium arch, and what "teasers" and "wood wings" are. He must recognize the difference between drops and olios, between cycloramas and grand draperies. He must be familiar with how the orchestra rehearses a new show, and the meaning of the words "tacit" and "segue" that occur so frequently in pencil on the music.

If a jazz orchestra is playing, or if an act introduces several different instruments, the critic must be able to tell each one at a glance. He must know the difference between an accordion, a piano accordion and a concertina, the difference between a flute, a piccolo and a clarinet; the difference between an oboe and a bassoon. A solo on any one of these instruments may be the outstanding part of the act.

It would not take so long to learn these things if each student had a text book in which the items had been compiled. But there is no such "handy guide", so this

knowledge must be gradually acquired over a period of years.

These are just a few things that must be known before the dramatic critic even enters on his new job. They will not all be known by then, of course, and there are some that he will probably never know. He will find new things to learn about the theater every week as long as he lives.

Granted then that the aspiring critic has made the theater his hobby and that he is as thoroughly acquainted with it as frequent attendance can make him, he must next learn to write. There is no experience in the world so good for the aspiring writer as reportorial work on a newspaper. He learns to use good English and to tell his story clearly and as directly to the point as it can be told.

He should start as a cub reporter with the regular assignments of hospitals, undertakers, halls and other small fry. As he improves he will get more important assignments. He may cover the city hall, work on the police beat, make the rounds of the business beat, or cover the courts. He is quite likely to get a bit of everything on a fairly good-sized paper. It all helps, for it gives him a wide experience in all forms of writing and makes it possible for him in later years to tackle even the most difficult type of play and write a concise, clear review of it as rapidly as he once wrote a news story.

This apprenticeship in general news writing should last for several years. If he shows the executive ability that goes with the dramatic job he will probably be promoted to city editor, telegraph editor or some of the other desk jobs. Experience of this kind is just as essential as is the writing experience, for only a few newspapers in the country have dramatic critics who are not also dramatic editors.

In his desk job he will learn to lay out the page, make copy and makeup schedules to be handed on to the news editor and makeup editor. He will learn to prepare the art work for the Sunday pages and to write all his headlines. He will learn to make his Sunday page look different each week and to make it as attractive as possible in each issue.

Say, then, that the aspiring critic has learned to write clearly and intelligently, loves the theater and has studied it ever since he was first able to gain entrance, has learned to write headlines and lay out his section, and has in every other way completed the foundation on which he is to build throughout the coming years, then he is ready to take up his work as a dramatic critic.

Now he will find that the dramatic department is divided into two parts. One part deals with the legitimate, vaudeville, musical comedy and burlesque stages, while the other deals with motion pictures. Most dramatic editors have an assistant who handles the pictures, but this branch of the theater is rapidly becoming so important that it will soon require as well-grounded a person for this work as is demanded for the regu-

lar stage. In fact, the publicity departments of the motion picture studios deluge the dramatic editor with so much more "literature" than the stage attractions are able to get out that most of our Sunday papers are largely devoted to motion pictures in the dramatic section. This mass of publicity, which may amount to hundreds of pieces a week, must be sifted at a glance and the important and interesting items picked out for use while the rest finds its way into the waste basket.

Women are finding a greater and greater opportunity in the motion picture end of the dramatic department. One of the chief reasons for this is that the publisher has refused to appropriate a sum large enough for the maintenance of two men at living salaries in the dramatic department, and an ambitious, capable girl with a desire to write can be found who will do the work for a mere pittance in order to get the experience.

But all this might be described as the mere mechanics of dramatic criticism. Now comes the actual writing of the criticism; but this must be reserved for the next article.

Lo, the Iconoclast

Helen Louise Walker

In Which a Writer Humbly Voices Her Envy of the Cocksure Cognacenti Who Glory in Their Idol Busting

I SHOULD love to be an iconoclast! It must be great fun to thumb one's literary nose at those in high places, to view with scorn the efforts of everybody who does not agree with one, to feel contempt for things as they are—and to know exactly how they should be!

It must be a wonderful sensation to be able to distinguish at once, with no feeling of doubt, between the true and the false, to pierce the shams of the bigoted and to point with an unfailing finger at the weaknesses of hypocrites.

It must give one a feeling of awful responsibility to be familiar with the dark places of men's hearts, to know their hidden weaknesses, their secret vices and the mysterious obscenities that lurk in the dim corners of their souls.

But somehow I cannot achieve that state of mind. No sooner do I work myself up to a mood of satiric disgust than the sun shines out suddenly, or a crocus blooms, and in an instant the mood is gone. I am too good-natured, somehow, and I cannot feel irritated with the world for long at a time. I am so contented that sometimes I fear I am shallow!

I discover my friend to be a clod. He is lacking in exalted in-

stincts and noble ambitions. He does not live for Art, or Truth, or anything else with a capital letter. I begin to view him with satisfied scorn.

Then suddenly I catch a gleam in him of pure love, of absolute self-abnegation, a glimpse of him in ardent pursuit of a dream. And I am ashamed. My scorn rebounds upon myself as a petty fault-finder.

I have never hob-nobbed with hoboes. I have never been a prize-fighter or a bum. I have never shipped before the mast on a tramp steamer bound for the South Seas. I confess these things with pain and a proper embarrassment. But I have seen vice and ignorance and poverty and dirt. And I have seen that sadder thing—genteel poverty which hides behind a brave, shabby mask of respectability. But always, somewhere, there is a gleam of beauty. There is no gutter so foul that the water in it cannot mirror the sky, no slum so poor but that babies romp upon its sidewalks, no degradation of soul so dark that love cannot show his shining face for an instant.

I cannot shake off the feeling that this irritability which is so prevalent just now among writers is connected in some way with a lack of good plumbing. The fretful literati whom I have happened to meet so often seem to need a bath and a shave. I feel that if they bathed more often they might be happier. Perhaps I am wrong. They may be too discouraged to care.

Or perhaps these iconoclastic writers whom I so admire and long to imitate suffer from insomnia and do their work in those ghastly hours just before the dawn when the world is an awesome place, haunted by gloomy specters. I can understand any amount of bitter skepticism and disbelief at such a time, but when the sun comes up and they view the fruits of their nocturnal labors in the light of day—what then? Can they still subscribe to sentiments recorded when vitality was at its lowest ebb?

I wish someone would tell me how they do it. I long to be brilliantly bitter—it produces such good publicity—but, alas! I fear I shall never achieve my ambition!

Emerson Says

A rush of thoughts is the only conceivable prosperity that can come to us.

Other men are lenses through which we read our own minds.

Courage consists in equality to the problem before us.

I can do that by another which I cannot do alone. I can say to you what I cannot first say to myself.

To describe adequately is the high power and one of the highest enjoyments of man. This is Art.

Including Interviewing

Charles Abbott Goddard

There Are Tricks In All Trades, Including the Art of Procuring an Interview When the Subject Balks

NO FIELD of writing offers greater rewards than that in which material is procured by interviews. Aside from the satisfaction of meeting so many and so many different types of people — all striving — there is a wealth of material to be gotten for direct use, which stands first in the editor's preference. But by the writer's retaining the facts of such an interview in mind, future material is available for other articles and even for fiction. It is just a matter of twisting and using new "slants."

There are many magazines in the trade field that will not accept articles unless these articles deal with and mention actual men or concerns; and other editors who do not have this requirement nevertheless accept more readily the article written about some stated man or specific establishment. Back of the editor's preference is the reader's preference—a reader will be more inclined to read a "story" about some real person than a "blue sky" masterpiece, or even in preference to an article based on an actual experience that does not give names and places. Articles setting forth specific data present actual experience and human interest—authority. Hence the writer who can smell out leads and interviews will not always wish to annihilate the postman.

Perhaps the experiences and methods of one who has interviewed several thousands of subjects may help or encourage other writers who seek sources of material.

The Fellow Who Will Not Talk is bound to be met frequently—but he will talk. His reasons, likely, will be these: too busy; too modest; not willing to have everyone know the methods I've worked hard to develop; anything I can tell you will not be of interest to anyone else. None of these chaps are invulnerable. There is an opening somewhere. To find it—that is the interviewer's job.

A friendly chat (with notebook and pencil hidden) is the anesthetic that both renders the subject "gentle" and enables the interviewer to slip over questions with increasing frequency.

A recent experience illustrates this: A young man took over a

store and repeatedly stated that he would not talk for publication. He was firm and blunt. Still, he would chat when the writer began to discuss certain features of which he was proud. He ended a generous interview with an invitation to call again, any time. And he has since turned down other writers.

There was the overworked head of a concern in Colorado on whom the writer called. He is a slave to his desk and detail. Thus when the writer called, this man's head was bent low over some clerical work and he grunted answers without turning his face. It required some tact and action to get him out of that chair, then for the writer to stand there to prevent his immediate return. Eventually he talked freely.

At the head of a nationally known institution is a man whose modesty prevents him from telling of the unusual things he has done. But in his organization is a woman who came to it in the older days. She is well acquainted with the president's policy and accomplishments, and before calling on him the writer interviewed her. Three-fourths of the material came from her, and her "boss" sanctioned it. Usually there is some associate or subordinate—perhaps a fellow business man or rival—who can help one to complete a story. At least, they can give the interviewer some important clews.

"Mr. Goldmaker of the R & C told me I must get the story of your fine employees' pension plan," has smoothed the skids for a good story.

Another "opener" the writer has used is this: "Your reputation seems to have traveled; the 'How-to-Do-It' magazine of New York has asked me to talk to you about your plan for paying your salesmen." This causes the average man's eyes to brighten; for it is a satisfaction to hear that one's work has brought admiration from afar.

Foolishly, sometimes, a subject will withhold a certain item of information, but often by asking two or three questions one can by deduction get the desired facts.

There are some "don'ts" that the interviewer learns as his experience grows. One is to avoid having a third party at an interview. He will break into an interview and either exasperate the interviewer, prevent concentration, or sometimes influence the subject to refuse to talk on certain topics. Often these third parties are wives, loafing acquaintances, or even boorish employees.

Once in a while a subject is found who is made restless by the sight of note book or pencil before he warms up. A good way to bring out the book is to use a remark like this: "I wish to get that exactly, Mr. Fusser, so I'll make a note of it."

After all, one never needs a notebook as much as he thinks he does, and it is easy to become a slave to it. To write from

memory the report of an interview is easier than to wade through a mess of scribbled notes. The writer finds that if he waits a day or two before starting to write the story and then first visualizes the man talking, it will all come, even to verbatim remarks. The trained mind is a far better servant than we suppose it to be.

Magazines in these days seem to prefer a "story" dealing with one theme rather than a general write-up, or a picture of many phases of a man, or a concern's experience. This results in a number of by-products—material left over after the main theme is written. Readers will read six short single-idea articles when one long general one would scare them off. An illustration: One might write an article about the success of the Hard Steel Pipe Company and cover the concern's selling methods, its credit policy, its advertising, its accounting, its experimental work, and so on. But he would do better to prepare several articles around these several phases, selecting some keynote for each.

A little complimentary expression here and there in an article referring to some individual is just and is appreciated; but to "spread it on too thick" or too often in an article causes an undesirable reaction on the part of the reader, and even embarrasses the subject when he sees it in print. The writer has known of several cases in which a writer who was too flattering caused trouble for the subject's subordinate employees.

Reference has been made earlier in this article to the preference on the part of editors for articles that give names and places. If a writer gets a lead for an imaginary article he can get a name for it often by talking his theme over with some business man and getting his opinions on it.

It is well to be on the lookout for an incident or an experience that can be used to make a dramatic beginning for an article. A query such as this will often bring out such an incident: "Can you tell me, Mr. Smigg, of a case, as an illustration, in which this policy of yours was put to test?"

"Yes, I can," he may answer. "Just last week one of our clients in Topeka wrote us, etc."

Recently a writer prepared a feature article about a woman in a big department store who as an information clerk handles a large volume of requests for information, and of wide range. She is a remarkable person. She never refuses to help a puzzled inquirer. The writer referred to began his article by telling of a woman who came to the desk to learn the location of a certain hotel. This alert information clerk saw that all was not well. She learned that her visitor had a pistol and intended to visit

that hotel to shoot an alleged erring spouse. That incident led the reader into the story.

Speaking of by-products of interviews, a man interviewed will, in the course of a talk, occasionally drop a hint that is a lead for a future article, although it may be foreign to the matter discussed at the time. For example, one afternoon the head of a large mercantile concern in giving an interview mentioned his policy of promoting men even though it led to their taking positions outside his concern. It was just a casual remark, and not at all connected with the subject at hand, but it sounded interesting. Months later the writer on returning to that city, called and procured an article of an unusual slant based on that very remark. As "live" leads are valuable, it is well to remember such hints; better still, write them out and file them—accessibly.

There is still another plan that the writer has used to get "openers" that is, excuses for interviews. He often asks a business man to tell him of unsolved problems in his business and sources of what the business man calls "grief." Sometimes the request doesn't have to be made, for the subject voluntarily airs his troubles. With these problems in mind one can approach another business man with an inquiry about them; for example; "Mr. Makecoin, what do you do to overcome or reduce the problem of such and so?" Many times this leads to a specific article. Such an article is bound to hit the readers' hearts. And with a number of "grief" items before him, a writer has a good idea as to what sort of information readers and editors desire to get.

This brings to mind the fact that in preparing articles of a business man's or concern's experience there are a few points to keep in mind. A fiction writer uses the conflict idea. A writer of business articles uses the problem idea. When one tells of how a certain man conquered a certain problem he immediately has the attention of many others with similar problems before them. So the writer usually sets forth as a background the main problem; then he builds his article.

In accepting an article some months ago an editor of a business magazine told the writer:

"We used your article on Cash, Credit & Co. as a model to tell our staff boys how to write an article. Your 'story' began by telling of the difficulty the Cash, Credit & Co. met with in one phase of its business. Then it told what they did, and what their idea was in doing that particular thing. Lastly, it gave the results obtained. To my notion, that's what a 'how' article should be. And it gave the name and address of the concern —so that our readers knew it was actual experience."

Photographic illustrations for an article will bring several

advantages to the author. For this reason, instead of begging free prints, the writer has many times employed a photographer and directed the making of photographic illustrations. A photograph, or a set of them, if illustrative of actual points in the article, will add its own profit to one's check, will sell an article more readily, or will sell a longer article. But photographs should show some person or persons doing the thing that the article describes. That means action and posing. Mere studies in still life will not add much value or prestige to an article. Nor will conventional portraits or views of establishments.

An O. K. on the finished interview is a satisfaction to a magazine, subject and author. It is usually easily obtained. But don't try to get, in addition to the approval of the subject, that of his assistant, his stenographer—or his wife! Leave that to a diplomatic Hercules. Once the writer prepared a sold-in-advance interview which the head of an interesting business gladly gave him. The story was mailed to the subject for O. K. and several letters failed to get him to allow the article to run or to persuade him to tell what changes he wished made. His replies did not sound much like him. So the writer drove over to his establishment, which was an inn. The subject was pleasant, but unwilling; but by bulldog insistence he was influenced to admit that his chief clerk had condemned the script and had considered it injudicious to print it. Luckily, the clerk was off duty, or the article would never have been released. At that, the man's wife and her mother both held out against the piece; but by turning his back on them and almost demanding an O. K. the writer prevailed on the subject to sign against their wishes. One hates to be rude, but one person at a time is enough to interview, in most cases. When a subject approves an interview he becomes with you a defender of it; otherwise, the author is the goat betwixt editor and subject.

Often there is the difficulty of a subject who talks *too* easily. He is not always the windfall that he might seem. In his vanity he may give only "puff" material, or in his enthusiasm overshoot actual figures or accomplishments. One should learn to recognize him; perhaps another business man will warn the interviewer.

Only those business magazines that are hard put to it for material, or that stoop to win readers by flattery, print "puffs." These publications pay but small rates. Many newspapers do it to woo advertisers, and therefore often a newspaper man in writing an article for a business paper will forget and "puff" his subject.

Readers and editors of business magazines do not care for articles that tell what a fine fellow a business man is, how many lodges he has joined, how big

his plant is and how many people he employs; nor do they care that he says he is the biggest in his field; neither do they care to wade through a mere flowery description of his plant. But they would like to know how he developed the business,—just the bare facts gleaned from his experience that will help them.

In other words, interview your man remembering that you are representing hundreds of other business men who would like to learn facts from his business that will help or inspire them.

Live It! Eat It! Sleep It!

Irene Curtis Wallace

A Bit of Editorial Advice That is Only One Third Real but Wholly Serious

EXPERIENCE has shown that I and my ideas are exactly like cats and rats. Every time an idea sticks its head out of a hole and I do not pounce upon it immediately, but leave it a few days, I am sure to find that a non-procrastinator already has it by the nape of the neck!

I make no protest, mind you, for I'm "strong" for non-procrastinators, and admire them greatly. But I have decided that this time I would better pounce first. Like as not, a "non" already has it by the tail, but here goes:

My WRITER'S MONTHLY came just before lunch hour. Now it's 2 P. M., the dishes are washed, and I'm hastening to beat the rest of you to Springfield with my experience on diet.

Here are the facts, just as I stated them to a friend last week: "There's one thing I've found out. I accomplish just about ten times as much when I eat less. Too, I feel a hundred per cent better."

I can put it no plainer. When I over-eat, I feel dumpy, sleepy, tired in both body and mind. It is an effort for me to think or work and I have to drive myself mentally and physically.

Try a slice of pineapple and a lamb chop for breakfast; the same for lunch; and double it for dinner. Too, you may have either a cup of coffee or tea at one meal, or more. Keep this sort of thing up for a week and see how much more alert you will feel, how much more ready to work. You will find yourself supple and lithe of body and limb. Your mind will be clear and free, and you will handle your ideas with

ease. If that does not prove to be your experience, then it will not duplicate mine.

Of course, as this diet is supposed to reduce weight—though it does not so affect me in any marked degree—you must use your judgment as to the length of time you confine yourself to it.

When you do return to normal diet, continue the good work by restricting yourself to small portions, and one helping.

Miss Swett's "Open all windows" is part of my working program, but not the nap. A nap merely "knocks me out" for the rest of the day. I find I must do my sleeping between midnight and 6 or 7 A. M. —except on those occasions when some unruly thing insists on being given a hearing during those hours. Then I rise indignantly and blacken a lot of nice white paper. The indignation soon wears off, however, and I'm merry as a lark. I should probably whistle if it were not for wakening my long-suffering family. Since I must have their breakfasts ready, and lunches put up, so that they can reach work at 8 A. M., I refuse to welcome these night muses too frequently. I almost always work up until 12 at night, and if working on fiction, often until 1 or 1.30.

In the daytime, if I have worked either so hard or so long that I feel drowsy, I let in a supply of fresh air. Or if it is a pain or tiredness between the shoulders that annoys me, from too constant application to typing, or long hand writing, I walk back and forth through my rooms and read aloud what I've written. Or, throwing all work aside, I read from one of my current magazines, choosing a type of short fiction or article that then appeals to me; I like it to be by one of my favorite authors. I'm thus refreshed and can return to my work with renewed vigor.

For real recreation or play I swim. By joining a swimming class at an indoors swimming pool, this sport is available to me even in winter—two afternoons each week, when there is time for it. Since this is practically my only exercise, I find the time well spent, as I always come out refreshed and all kinks gone from both nerves and muscles.

If insomnia troubles me, I take a hot bath, drink a glass of hot milk, roll up in cotton flannel blankets, and sleep like a baby. That is a trick taught me by my old physician. Or if the weather is too hot for that device, an electric vibrator which my son gave me for my birthday is pressed into service. One of the family runs it along my spine while I relax and am lazy as can be; sleep then comes easily.

Fiction writing is for me the most strenuous work of all—particularly when I've been at a piece of work which an editor has asked me to re-work. For example, an editor said, "Blank" is what I want. I advise you to rewrite it—use more space for the situations—inject the element of mystery into it more noticeably.

"Pardon—but your dialogue is bad. I suggest you look over Mac Grath's or Ibanez' work. Get

someone to criticize the speech of your characters.

"Better work in another character—for contrast.

"Work steadily on this story for two weeks. Live it—eat it—sleep it. Every word and sentence. Then when *you* are satisfied—let me have it.

"One more word—do not make your climaxes so ordinary."

Well! When I've taken all this advice—lived it—eaten it—(with lamb chop, pineapple and tea) and slept once in a while—for two weeks, I'm ready for the swim, the bath, the hot milk, the vibrator, or any other schemes for self-improvement I can get!

But when at last I've done my very best and have had it nicely typed, I am far from satisfied! Who ever is, even if he is a Mac Grath or an Ibanez? But I take a whole day off, for I am so tired that I actually feel lame and sore in both muscles and nerves—and darn sox for my family, give the house a good overhauling, or make three pair of rompers for my tiny grandson—all for a change!

Even so engaged, it is impossible to be free of the writing urge. For the little red devil that pursues us spoilers-of-white-paper will start sticking a pitchfork, a pen, or whatever it is he prods us with, into me from an entirely new angle.

Then I'm all ready for work again! Breakfast over, lunches put up, dishes done, beds made, kitchen swept—at 8.45 or 9 A. M.—I'm off on another fiction spree, and having "the time of my life!" Then I refuse to let anything interrupt, except, of course, that my writing is of necessity interspersed with meal-getting and those other little incidentals which are part of the delightful composite that goes to make up the program of a family woman.

I love to do things for my family, even to ironing shirts. But experience has taught me that, the days being so short, I must pick and choose among the things I love to do, even for my loved ones, if I am to have any time to write!

You may assume that I have departed far from my topic of dietetics; but have I? Increases or decreases of output, and the ability to keep on writing while caring for my home, are largely the result of a simple diet—not forgetting the editorial advice: "Live it—eat it—sleep it." In this way much of my output somehow stays put.

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide. . . . that no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given him to till.—RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

Literary Salesmanship*

John Hammond Churchill

The Fifth of a Series of Articles on a Vital Subject

The Consideration of Sale

THE CONSIDERATION in the outright sale of a manuscript by an author is usually a check; the *quid pro quo* for the editorial buyer is the manuscript itself, and, in most cases, all rights to its publication. Most well-financed periodicals pay for magazine material on acceptance.

When a check does not accompany the letter of acceptance, it is commonly mailed from the business office at one of the regular payment dates; as, for example, on the first or the fifteenth of the month. Then, if the writer is willing to dispose of the purchasable rights in his manuscript at the price paid, the transaction is closed.

It is well to have a clear-cut understanding in the first place as to what is being offered the editor—whether the author is willing to relinquish all right and title to his submitted work, or whether he desires to reserve to himself certain other "rights", as they are called, other than that of a single periodical publication, usually termed "first, or magazine, rights."

In the great majority of cases, "All Rights" are understood to be offered. An author who wishes to reserve certain other publication or production rights may do so by stating the fact in the upper right-hand corner of the manuscript, and also in the letter that accompanies the manuscript. "First magazine rights" signifies that only the first publication rights are being offered.

There is a general misconception as to the value of "rights" in manuscripts submitted for periodical publication. Occasionally, a story, poem or article so printed may be used to advantage a second time. A poem may be printed in an anthology, or in the author's collected writings. An article may provide the nucleus for a serious book. A short-story may be eligible for republication in a periodical or in book form. These opportunities are uncommon. Opportunities for screen or stage adaptation are, in the case of lesser writers, rarer still. Ordinarily, the literary salesman may dispose of all rights in a given manuscript without fear of loss thereafter; and he should not uselessly stipulate conditions that

*This series was begun in the August, 1926 issue.

may affect the first sale of a manuscript, in order to gain problematic advantages arising out of a second sale that will never come about unless the material is first accepted and printed, and probably not then. Of course there are exceptions to the foregoing "ordinarily"—of which more presently.

I would put it down as Rule I under our chapter heading that a literary salesman should accord every buyer he "calls on" all the courtesies to which a credit customer is entitled. If, therefore, payment for accepted material does not come through immediately, that the delay is unintentional is a safe assumption. Should several weeks elapse, a gracious letter of inquiry will usually bring the desired check. Certainly, to work under a condition of affairs that demands constant suspicion and watching on the writer's part does not make either for good work or good salesmanship. If one's trust has been abused, as sometimes it may be, without legal redress, to fill the writer's magazines with complaints, will gain one nothing. Let the literary salesman act as a business man would: pocket losses like a good sport, and avoid thereafter magazines guilty of sharp practice.

Editors will, as a rule, do the fair thing with regard to rights. The custom is becoming quite general among them of re-assigning rights to authors on an equitable basis when it appears that other than "first serial rights" are valuable—which is much more likely with long fiction than with short-stories, articles or poems. "First serial rights," or "first magazine rights," cover, of course, the right to publish for the first time. The editor is not, however, compelled to print what he buys—although he usually does so, as a matter of course.

After "first serial rights," the rights of chief importance are "second serial rights." These cover the second printing of literary material—usually novels, or novelettes—purchased by editors of lesser magazines whose subscription list does not conflict with that of the magazine in which the stories made their first appearance. "Second serial rights," which thus enable editors whose expenditures for material are limited to place "big names" before their readers, may be sold to more than one magazine; but the value of such rights decreases with the age of the stories and the number of times they have previously appeared. "Second serial rights" are usually arranged for through the editorial offices, through agents or through syndicates, and are sold at a flat price.

"Book rights" are first rights to publication in book form. First serial publication usually precedes book publication, with which it ordinarily does not interfere. On the other hand, book publication does somewhat interfere with serial publication thereafter, and rights to serialize a published book are usually "second rights." Payment for book rights is commonly on a royalty basis; and the contract between author and book publisher often includes an agreement cov-

ering the date and nature of advance serialization previously arranged for with some magazine. Contracts for the publication of certain classes of books, other than fiction, sold outright, usually include all rights.

"Re-print book rights" stand to "first book rights" in the same relation that second serial rights stand to first serial rights. When a successful novel loses its selling momentum at its original price, it may be sold to reprint publishers to bring out on a low royalty basis as a "popular coypright." This transaction is almost always arranged by the original publisher of the book, and the original book contract with the author often covers the possibility of re-sale, although no standard custom exists.

"Syndicate rights" are similar to "second serial rights," but include short-stories in series and other brief but connected material furnished to groups of newspapers and magazines for practically simultaneous publication. Short-stories, children's stories and humor previously published in magazines, are often syndicated. "Syndicate rights" also cover material especially prepared for syndication that has its first and only publication in the newspaper press. Payment for syndicate material is sometimes on a royalty basis, according to the number of papers in which it appears, and sometimes at a flat price.

"Photoplay rights," or "dramatic rights," covering the right to adapt fiction for the screen or the stage, usually do not take on value unless book publication or serialization has demonstrated the existence of popular appeal. Of course this does not mean material that has been originally written for stage or screen.

Dramatic rights are in less demand than photoplay rights. It is well known that moving picture producers often engage in competitive bidding for the right to adapt a very popular book, play or serial. Since the custom of some publishing houses, which make a practice of co-operating with authors in the sale of moving picture rights, is at variance with the custom of publishing concerns that definitely purchase "all rights," with the expectation of profiting by the sale of other rights than the first serial or book rights, every literary salesman should keep himself fully informed as to the practice of the companies with which he is dealing, and govern his dealings accordingly.

Plays are produced on the stage for the first time under "first stage rights," contracted for on a royalty basis computed on the gross weekly receipts. After a play has been produced, the right to publish in book form is governed by "book rights"—the author reserving the right of amateur production from the book, to be had on a flat royalty for each performance.

New rights have been created by the widespread introduction of the radio. "Radio rights" cover the radio use of a song; "radio adaptation rights" cover the right to adapt plays or stories for broadcasting.

"Foreign rights" and "translation rights" are not (with the average run of literary material) in demand. However, foreign rights include the right to publish in all countries other than the United States. In the case of books that have become very popular, foreign rights are sometimes broken up into various sections; as, "Canadian rights", "British Colonial rights", etc. The publisher usually arranges for rights of this sort and for "translation rights", and only, as said before, when the popularity of the work has extended or is likely to extend beyond this country.

The buyers of first British rights to American literary material, or of first American rights to British literary material of the first rank, demand synchronous publication in both countries—a copyright provision, in fact, with printed books, arrangements to comply with which must necessarily be made by the publishers, not the author. This is not the case, however, with magazine material of a lesser order, first British rights to which may be offered by the authors themselves, with depreciation in value, considerably after the first publication in this country.

"All rights" is an inclusive term that indicates that the writer has disposed of his manuscript absolutely, and neither now nor at any future time will he have further claims on the manuscript. "All rights" in the case of a song would include "talking machine rights" —that is, the right to reproduce on talking machine records.

"Rights" are technically disposed of whenever a sale is consummated. That is, if nothing whatever is said about rights, it is understood that all rights are included, unless the magazine has a distinct policy to the contrary. In some cases, the payment check sent out by magazines specifies what it is for. Other magazines have a custom of sending out a "cover" receipt, which is to be filled out by the author on receipt of the check. For these reasons an author who wishes to reserve specific rights in his manuscript should carefully scrutinize his remittance check and be careful what form of receipt he signs.*

Where payment for literary material is not made on acceptance, but on publication, the author who sells on such terms tacitly agrees to the disposal of all rights, unless specific notation to the contrary is made. It goes without saying that after a story has been published, it is then too late for the author to make claims regarding rights. If he thinks the rights to his story, other than the first rights, are valuable, he should in selling his story on a payment-on-publication basis be more than ordinarily careful to arrrive at a clear understanding with the editor.

This, however, is only one of the disadvantages of selling work for payment on publication. The great disadvantage is that the author is not assured of publication within

*See the chapter on "Author's Rights," by J. Berg Esenwein, in "Where & How to Sell Manuscripts" published by the Home Correspondence School.

a reasonable time. In consequence, he may have to wait for a very long time for his honorarium, and possibly he may not see the publication of his work at all. In such a case, the author has no legal come-back. He cannot compel the editor to publish the accepted manuscript, nor to pay for it until it is published. He may request the return of his manuscript, and often this will be granted, but in the meantime he will have lost valuable time.

Writers have good reason for favoring magazines that pay on acceptance over those that pay on publication. Nevertheless, some magazines of wide circulation still hold to the payment-on-publication policy, and sometimes it is wiser for the author to sell when chance offers rather than not to make a sale. Some classes of material are handled on the when-published basis because payment is computed at space rates, which cannot be determined until the material is used. This is especially true of trade paper and newspaper material.

If the price offered by the editor is deemed by the author to be inadequate, he may—at his discretion—say so, and either propose a revision of the rates upward, or decline to sell at all. The time to make such an objection is immediately following the receipt of acceptance, with notice of the amount or rate offered.

The wisdom of such a proceeding must be left to the individual author, who will of course be guided by his previous selling experience, and will not object to the payment-rate without very good reason.

Publication of book material at the author's expense does not properly come under the Consideration of Sale, because the author, who pays the expenses of publication, and who supposedly knows what he is doing, either expects no consideration beyond seeing his work preserved in print, or else intends to conduct his own sales operations and has no illusions about the large "royalties" offered. Literary material of a kind for which a very limited sale in book form exists—scientific researches, statistical data, poems and the like—often cannot be undertaken by publishing firms wholly at their own expense, who not unreasonably may ask the author to become part publisher. This is a legitimate transaction—when the author is not deceived.

But, unfortunately, there is a class of publishers who make a business of printing "author's books"—poetry, belles-lettres, fiction—and solicit such publication with specious offers of high royalties on the gross sales. Since these "vanity publishers", as they are tartly named, rarely have well organized distributing departments, gross sales are likely to be insignificant, and royalties, however high per book, are very small per edition, and will not repay the tricked writer the cost of his publishing venture. His "consideration of sale" will be the pleasure of seeing his work in print.

Play manuscripts are sold by

contract, as we have already seen, under which royalties based on gross weekly box-office receipts are paid. Frequently, advances of cash are made to writers against royalties to come, but only to successful authors. There is now a standard form of minimum play contract, agreed to by most of the theatrical producers, which fairly protects the author's rights. This contract, a complicated document, provides for the possible sale or lease of "stock company rights", "amateur rights", radio translations, and moving picture rights.

Book manuscripts are also sold on contract, but there is no standard form. Contracts offered by book houses of standing to experienced authors are usually fair. Some of the contracts offered to writers who have their first book up for consideration, and by book houses not of the highest standing, are questionable documents. It should be reiterated that an author should refrain from a suspicious attitude, but that he has every good reason to scrutinize the provisions of his contract in the light of his own interests.

It is for the individual author to do what he wishes, of course; but it is the part of prudence to keep his eyes open with regard to such possible contract omissions as, no stipulated time for publication, or no provision for advance royalties, and, therefore, in all probability no actual payments for perhaps a year. He should also "watch his step" before signing a contract in which royalties do not begin until some thousands of copies have been sold, or which give the publisher a too-large percentage of the subsidiary rights, or which include an option on the next several books of the author *on the same terms.*

Naturally, no advice other than of the most general sort can be given here. Publishers will, in the main, be fair; but they are business men engaged in an industry with more than the average amount of hazard, and "self-preservation is the first law of nature". Fiction royalties are rarely over ten per cent of the published price of the book (except with very popular writers); royalties on some special classses of books, such as educational texts, are usually lower—for "first publication rights", of course.

These publication "rights" depend on the copyright, secured when the book is published. Therefore, a brief discussion of the U. S. Copyright Law now in force is in order. The law as now constituted is unsatisfactory both to authors and publishers, and there is at present a bill in Congress that may change matters.

There can be but one copyright under the present law, granted for the following classses of literary material: Books, periodicals, lectures for oral delivery, and dramatic compositions. Where various other "rights" exist, they depend on the first copyright. If the literary material is published in a magazine, it is copyrighted automatically with the other contents of the periodical by "blanket copyright," the owners of which ma-

terial are thus the recorded holders of the copyright. Where other than first rights are valuable, it is important that copyright be reassigned to the author after publication.

The first step to copyright periodical fiction or book material is to publish it. Stories, articles, and poems are NOT copyrightable in manuscript form. Dramatic compositions for production, oral addresses, and musical compositions ARE copyrightable in manuscript.

The situation with regard to motion picture plays is complicated, because the law provides, first, for copyright of the film play itself on deposit of the title, a description of the work and a photograph of a scene from each act; and, secondly, for photoplays that are published (i.e., placed on sale, sold or publicly distributed) ; but it does not provide for the registration of plays *before* partial or complete production, or complete publication, other than as a dramatic composition, which it really is not.

Fiction, articles, poems, motion picture scenarios and books *in manuscript form* are protected under the common law. That is, a writer whose manuscript work has been infringed upon, and who can prove that the infringer had previous access to the work, may recover damages by suit.

Suit is *equally* necessary to recover damages on infringements of copyright. However, the injured party has legal proof of the publication date of his composition, if he has copyrighted it, and also of its public distribution;—how the infringer became in possession of a published work is not pertinent to this discussion.

Application for copyright must be made on blanks supplied free by the Copyright Office. These blanks and complete information as to their use, and as to the law, can be had on request of the Register of Copyrights, Washington, D. C.

The next installment in this series will be devoted to The First Step in Salesmanship.

We are blind until we see
That in the human plan,
Nothing is worth the making
If it does not make the man.

—Edwin Markham

Ecclesiastical Terms

Robert Murphy

Many a Story Lacks Verisimilitude Because Its Terminology Is Inexact and the Newspapers Often Display the Same Fault

OBVIOUSLY not every writer is equipped to write accurately of every phase of life. Omniscience is an attribute of Deity, alone. One can acquire a certain amount of technical knowledge, however, without the expenditure of an undue amount of time and energy, and this will be sufficient to tide one over an emergency, and indeed will be equal to any ordinary demands.

Nowhere are errors more frequently made or more glaringly apparent than in the matter of ecclesiastical terminology. I refer specifically, in this connection, to allusions made in fiction to the services, appointments and customs of the liturgical churches. In this group of liturgical churches I include the Roman Catholic, the Anglican (which includes the Church of England and the Episcopal Church in the United States), the Greek Orthodox, and certain portions of the Lutheran Church, though of course others are also liturgical in their forms.

Many a good story has lost in effect, indeed many a story has been utterly ruined, because the author betrayed the fact that he was writing about something which he himself did not fully understand. Such errors are not always confined to the amateur writer, nor is the writer of fiction the only one who errs in this respect. Many reputable newspapers often contain what are, to the initiate, glaring absurdities. Reporters are notoriously frequent offenders in this matter. I am reminded of a notice that came to my attention recently. The society reporter of a certain paper was apparently "spreading herself" when she wrote the account of a wedding for her column, but it contained the following startling information:

"Preceding the wedding party up the aisle came the vested boys' choir of the Church of the Advent, one of their number bearing at their head a gleaming *crucible.*" Of course, what she should have written was *crucifix,* or *cross.* The one who bears the cross in an ecclesiastical procession is called a *crucifer.* Apparently, when the reporter had asked what his official designation was, her ears played a trick on her and recorded "crucible" for the cross that the crucifer —cross bearer—carried.

This instance is no less amusing

than the two startling statements made by a reporter some years ago, which by this time have become classics in clerical circles. He wrote, "The acolytes hung from the rood-screen, and the Bishops were vested in their rubrics." Consider: the rood-screen is a semi-partition dividing the chancel from the nave of the church; the acolytes are the boys who assist the priest in the conduct of public services; the rubrics are the printed directions in the Prayer Book dealing with the manner of conducting the services. Translated, the reporter in reality conveyed the astonishing information that "the boys were hanging from a partition and the Bishops were clad in printed directions." Assuredly, that must have been a curious service.

If the writer be a member of one of the previously named churches, ecclesiastical terminology should present no difficulties. Otherwise, he would better make certain of what he is saying before he ushers hero and heroine into the church and up the aisle for the last act of their fictitious career lest he present them before the altar clad only in printed directions.

The following brief summary of terms and their meanings should be sufficient for all ordinary purposes. These apply only to the first three churches named, Roman, Greek and Anglican. Sufficient similarity in services and terms exists between these three communions so that the following terms may be used interchangeably, except where noted.

A *Bishop* is one who presides over a group of parishes, in a given geographical area, called a Diocese. He is in charge of no one parish, hence, normally, a Bishop does not solemnize the rites of Holy Matrimony or assume other duties that belong exclusively to the parochial clergy. There are exceptions to this rule, but they are few. It will be safer for the writer not to have a Bishop perform the wedding ceremony, baptize the child, or bury the dead. Confirmation, on the other hand, is administered exclusively by a Bishop, as is Ordination. In addressing a letter to a Bishop, he should be addressed as "the Right Reverend John Jones." In familiar conversation, he is called "Bishop Jones."

In the Roman, Greek and Anglican Churches, the pastor of a local parish is called a "priest." In the Roman Church, the head priest is said to be the "pastor" of a parish; in the Anglican and Protestant Episcopal Churches, he is usually called the "rector." The same term is applied in the Roman Catholic Church to the chief dignitary of a religious house; and, generally, to some college corporations. Neither one of these terms, however, is a proper form of direct address. They merely indicate official positions. The priest is addressed formally as "the Reverend Thomas Brown." Familiarly, he is called "Father Brown," which is often contracted in writing to "Fr. Brown."

A church edifice is divided into three parts, Sanctuary, Chancel and Nave. The Sanctuary is the

railed-off portion enclosing the altar. The Chancel is that section occupied by the choir. The Nave is that part of the Church occupied by the congregation. In some churches, notably Roman Catholic Churches, there is no Chancel, and the choir occupies a balcony in the rear of the building.

The clergy, choir and servers, or acolytes, wear *vestments,* not *gowns* or *robes,* during the service. The men of the choir wear black *cassocks* and white linen *cottas.* The women of the choir wear white *cottas,* black skirts, and *choir caps.* The *servers,* or boys who assist, usually wear red *cassocks* and white *cottas* trimmed with lace.

The priest, for all ordinary services, wears a black *cassock,* a white linen *surplice,* and a *stole,* or band of colored silkwork draped across the shoulders and around the neck. The color of the stole varies with the character of the services: at weddings, a white stole is worn; at funerals, a black stole, etc. Usually the academic hood is worn, of the degree held by the wearer. The black square cap worn is called a *biretta.*

The chief service of the liturgical churches is the Holy Communion, variously called the Mass, the Holy Eucharist, or the Divine Liturgy. All these names are used interchangeably and all refer to the same service. In the Roman Church, the word "Mass" is most frequently used to designate this service; in the Anglican Churches both the "Holy Eucharist" and the "Holy Communion" are used. In the Greek Church, the "Divine Liturgy" or the "Holy Eucharist" are equally used. This is no hard and fast rule, however, and one will find that to use any one of these various terms, is quite correct when referring to any one of the three churches.

The priest who says the Mass, or celebrates the Holy Eucharist, is called the *celebrant.* The priest who officiates at all other services is called the *officiant.* When celebrating the Mass, the priest wears *Mass,* or *Eucharistic, vestments* instead of those previously described. When the Mass is celebrated in connection with a wedding, it is called a *Nuptial Mass;* when in connection with a funeral, it is a *Requiem Mass.*

The boy who swings the censer is called the *thurifer.* The censer is often called the *thurible.*

The small red light burning constantly before the altar is called the *Sanctuary Lamp.* It is never permitted to go out.

Never refer to the "collection"; it is more properly called "the offering". Never speak of the "audience"—audiences belong to concert halls and the theater. Say "the congregation".

These are merely a few of the terms with which the writer should be familiar if he intends to use in his story anything of an ecclesiastical nature, pertaining to the liturgical churches.

Should further details be desired, the writer will usually find that the local clergy of these churches will be glad to help him.

Troublesome Geese

Margery Swett Mansfield

How Shakespeare Managed Them Constitutes an Object Lesson Well Worth the Study of Poets

WHOEVER tests literature by reading it aloud knows that the letter *s* is the most troublesome of the alphabet. There are worse letters, but they occur more rarely. Read almost any poem aloud, or any piece of prose, and if you have sharpened your ears for phonetics you soon become painfully aware of the recurring sibilant.

A wise teacher of English, noting the shape of the printed and typewritten *s*, used to say to his pupils, "Not so many geese, not so many geese! You have enough here to stock a farm!"

There is neither desire nor possibility of eliminating the geese entirely. A writer's aim is merely to keep them unobtrusive. That is difficult enough, for English grammar could almost be said to be built on the letter *s*. The plural and the possessive of regular nouns, the third person singular of regular verbs all end in this often vexatious form. Consequently if a writer puts a subject in the singular in order to avoid *s* he runs into it anyhow when he reaches the verb.

Also many intrinsically beautiful and poetic things are designated, in English, by words beginning with *s*: star, sea, sunshine, sunset, sparrow, swift, swallow, skylark, starling, songster, silver, satin, sands, sound, song, sing, singer, sweet, soft, sparkling, spell-bound, snow, spangled, sycamore, sacred, stillness, splendor, and hosts of others. Also nearly every adjective can achieve the state of a noun by adding one of the sibilant suffixes, *ness* or *cy*. We can only conclude that English is fundamentally a hissing tongue.

Sound is important in prose, but it is more important in verse, as poetry is a vocal art—poems should be, and frequently are, read aloud or recited. Consequently poets, and teachers of potential poets, are anxious to dodge some of the geese.

As a matter of curiosity, and in hope of enlightenment, I spent a rainy day running through poetry that had defied time, making notes on the management of sibilants.

First, as a basis of comparison, I sampled here and there in a contemporary anthology of about average magazine verse, then I settled down to Palgrave's "Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics"—largely because it was a convenient-

ly sized collection, near at hand, and could also be expected to present poems of high phonetic quality, since sound is a primary consideration in determining a good lyric.

My first discovery was reassuring to struggling writers: an *s* to a line is the common circumstance in the poetry of the best writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Sometimes there are two or three *s's* to a line. Keats in his "Ode on a Grecian Urn" goes through seventeen lines, many of them with three sibilants, before he strikes an *s*-less line. With an immortal poem so burning with the sizzling letter, we can hardly take contemporary transgressions much to heart.

Still, though a liberal seasoning with the salty consonant may not kill poetic magic, it seemed possible that a skillful management of this detail might be necessary to justify its presence, to say nothing of giving added beauty. I turned to the first section of the anthology. This contained poems written between 1526 and 1616. I was interested in them for two reasons: first, because the winnowing effect of time would lessen the chance of phonetically poor poems surviving from such early times; second, because it seemed likely that English was at that time at its best, from a standpoint of sound.

Reading was not then a universal accomplishment. That was the day when the spoken word, from pulpit, stage, and legislative hall, was the means of welding public opinion. The writer of the time was somewhat in the position of the musical composer of today, who writes out his score knowing that his work will not reach its largest audience in its written form, and consequently thinks of it merely as a representation of sounds.

This attitude in early days must have put a premium on sonority, and trained the writer's ears more acutely than is common today. It is significant that though we have made numerous translations of the Bible, some of which are declared to be more accurate than the King James's version, none of these has been able to supplant it, because—it is believed—that none has achieved English that sounds so well.

So I turned to the lyrics of Elizabethan poets and found that though they were often lavish with *s's*, frequently alliterating on it, they resorted more frequently than do modern poets to the line without any *s* at all. In other words, they employed contrast.

Whether this was conscious, or merely the result of having finely tuned ears, we have no way of knowing; and it is of little consequence — since observation and analysis are needed only when natural facility is inadequate.

Shakespeare can usually be counted on to give an *s*-less line after six sibilant ones, if not before. His average is more nearly one in every four. There are exceptions, of course. The lyric beginning, *O mistress mine,* has an *s* in every one of its twelve lines, but this is offset by poems that alternate *s* and *s*-less lines or couplets.

The following familiar example is thought by some scholars to antedate Shakespeare. In the first stanza the alternation is of couplets; in the second, of lines.

Crabbed Age and Youth
Cannot live together:
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather,
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare:

The pattern is not kept throughout the poem, but the percentage of *s's* is low, and would be very low if we counted the final *s* of "is" as a *z*-sound. However, *z* has all the objections made against the *s*, but as "is" is so frequently unaccented in verse, its sibilant sound is not obtrusive. The lyric ends with what is almost a contrasting of sibilant and non-sibilant couplets:

O! my Love, my Love is young!
Age, I do defy thee—
O sweet shepherd, hie thee;
For methinks thou stay'st too long.

It may be but accident, yet if so it seems a happy one that the lines referring to age are relatively less sibilant than the youth-lines. There is, after all, a certain sweet lightness in the effect of *s*—it is struck so softly. It also has a certain indolence, recalling the buzz of bees, and the lisp of waters on a summer's day; hence it is not strange to find it used profusely in Spring and Summer poems.

On the other hand, its absence makes for a mellower line, a deeper, richer line, and one that is more distinctive because of its relative rarity.

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:

The second line, at least, is more lovely and more temperate, though that is partly due to the slowing of the tempo, due in turn to several causes.

Other examples of alternating lines might be quoted for their sheer phonetic beauty:

Tell me where is Fancy bred,
Or in the heart, or in the head?
How begot, how nourishéd?
Reply, reply.

The next four lines of this lyric all have *s*, but after them comes the contrasting refrain:

I'll begin it,—Ding dong bell,
—Ding dong bell.

This brings us to the observation that the lines inserted so commonly during that period for phonetic effect rather than for meaning are almost invariably without sibilants and are inserted most commonly in lyrics that have an abundance of *s's*.

Come unto these yellow sands,
And then take hands:
Courtsied when you have, and kiss'd
The wild waves whist,
Foot it featly here and there;
And, sweet Sprite, the burthen bear
Hark, hark!
Bow-wow.

The watch dogs bark:
Bow-wow.
Hark, hark! I hear
The strain of strutting chanticleer
Cry, Cock-a-diddle-dow!

Or take these lines from Nash's "Spring":

Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

It is not the vogue now to use these lines of merely lyrical value. We think, I believe rightly, that meaning, human truths, and the magic of image are our chief interests, and that the refrain lines were a too-easy way of meeting phonetic problems. Yet perhaps the problem should be met, now as then, even if greater strain must be put now on genius or on ingenuity.

It is significant that so many of Shakespeare's relatively rare *s*-less opening lines introduce particularly well known lyrics:

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
. . . . . .
Under the greenwood tree
. . . . . .
Crabbed Age and Youth
. . . . . .
On a day, alack the day!
. . . . . .
Come live with me and be my Love, (Marlowe)

Of course there are equally famous sibilant opening lines, but since opening lines containing *s* are so much more common, the proportion of them that achieve renown is smaller. Ben Jonson's immortal "Drink to me only with thine eyes," with one or two variations, keeps the alternation of *s* lines and *s*-less lines up to the last quatrain. All this would seem to indicate the value of an occasional non-sibilant line, or at least of non-sibilant phrases, balanced against sibilant ones to furnish relief within the line.

These cogitations are, of course, merely suggestions—and of the most casual sort—based on what is after all a very cursory survey of some poetry that has come across the centuries, largely for phonetic reasons. To mention the *s* factor at all seems almost to overstress it, there being so many other phonetic merits in the verse of the Elizabethan period. Yet the factor is there, and the writer who is troubled by the sibilant quality of his own writing, or the reader who is interested in niceties of detail, may be interested in studying how Shakespeare and his fellows took care of the troublesome geese.

From the Brown Owl's Oak

Dear Father Time:

Thank you for the warning that you have sent us. Calendar had already given us an intimation that you are assigning us this young "Annus MCMXXVII," and that he will soon be turning up. We shall be ready for him.

As you suggest, there is nothing against him yet—nothing, at least, beyond the fact that some of his predecessors were not all that they should have been. We don't blame you for that, and you probably won't be offended by our mentioning it. Everybody knows it. You have to send us what you have, and it has to be a Hobson's choice with you as with us.

How these young chaps turn out, what they do for—or to—us, depends after all a good deal on us. Of course they have to contend against hangover bad effects of preceding years, but so do we; but then, we both share in the good effects that these same years pass on. The evil that years do oft cannot be interred with their bones, and the good need never be.

Any way, young Twenty-Seven hasn't any more choice about coming than we have about taking him as he comes or you have about sending him. Here's to him. His life will be short, but may it be merry and full of prosperous undertaking.

We will make him welcome, do our best by him, but keep an eye on him just the same. If we cooperate, he may turn out to be the best yet—we may sigh to see him go, and have his photograph framed to keep atop our desk.

Widsith was right

You remember how in his song Widsith—"Wide-Traveler" — comforted himself in tribulations? "This too shall pass," he told himself.

How long ago was it that editors turned blue of face and shook with chill at even the mention of a "war story"? The eclipse was total, but temporary; three years or so ago it began to pass, and now the unobscured sun shines in a fiction magazine named "War Stories."

Stories of the World War are no longer under interdiction. Widsith was right. But remember the old wanderer's theory: "This too shall pass."

For want of a nail . . .

"For want of a nail the shoe was lost. For want of a shoe the horse . . . ."

Our diction is the language we use. The division of rhetoric that considers diction is that which "deals with the choice and marshaling of words." Like our habits, our diction may be regrettable, passable, "pretty good," or excellent. Indeed, our diction is the result of our habits of thought and of thinking, since thought and thinking require the use even though not the utterance of words. Much of our woolliest thinking is woolly because we do not carry the idea or thought through to a clear and final wording in our mind.

Rhetorical usage discriminates between "correct" diction and "good" diction. Correct diction is good mainly in a formal and negative way; it avoids improprieties and violations of rule, but it may lack positive merit. It tends to flatness, monotony, or inertness.

Good diction, though it too respects the formalities of correctness, utilizes them with a more understanding appreciation and more vitally to a purpose. As a consequence, it is more individual and more effective. Good diction is correct diction on the way to become effective style. The quality and character of the writer's thought and of the writer himself —his "personality"—have begun to show themselves in it more fortunately and prosperously.

Between a good diction and a good style, the difference is a difference in degree rather than in kind. The expression has something more than the neutral virtue of mere correctness. It has in addition positive qualities resulting from the writer's quality of mind, character, and personality: vitality, force, vividness, picturesqueness, lightness, robustness, refinement, delicacy, fancy, imaginativeness, preciseness, boldness, insight, substance, love of beauty, what not. All these, as reflection convinces us, are dependent upon the man himself.

As thou art, so shalt thou write, and behold, thy speech bewrayeth thee. But who shall excel in style that excelleth not in diction?

What the city-editor is thinking

Now I know what happens when an irresistible force encounters an immovable body. Here's a pie-making contest on top of that wedding in high life, and no space left. Hey, Dudley! Kill that lecture on ions and atoms.

Wonder where the high-school janitor dumps all the grammar these youngsters leave behind when they "graduate" and come to work for us?

"Paul Revere's Ride" must be the only piece of reporting Blivens ever read. For six months I've been telling him not to begin with the time when it's not important, and see what he hands in! The time and a lot of other minor par-

ticulars before telling the news! "Probably at noon today, or at some other time when everybody was out of the room, the city office of Bright and Fair, raincoat manufacturers, in the Walkup Building, on Tenth Street near Bumps Boulevard, was entered by an outsider and . . ."! Blivens!!

A dragon and two St. Georges

"I don't agree with anything," Bernard Shaw is reported as answering a newsman who asked him if he agreed with Sinclair Lewis in thinking prizes to writers have an ill effect. Mr. Shaw has just refused the money portion—not the honor — of the year's Nobel prize in literature. Mr. Lewis, it will be remembered, refused the Pulitzer novel prize some months ago, expressing general and vigorous disapproval of such awards. Each of the refusals has its amusing aspect, for intentionally or unintentionally each of the refusing gentlemen sometimes appears in comedy character.

Sir Bernard and Sir Sinclair

Mr. Shaw is, of course, the one who chooses to make himself the world's jester-at-large in his generation. Mr. Lewis has traits that draw a smile or a thrust—at least from those endowed with perception for the 'humors' we mortals all betray—but he does not clown, not even to advertise his "views" or himself. He is indeed more literal-minded and less concrete-minded than Mr. Shaw.

Mr. Lewis is many years younger than the confrere of his who refused the Nobel prize before he knew either that Mr. Lewis refused the Pulitzer prize or that there is a Pulitzer prize, and there would still be time enough for the development in him of any tendency toward such buffant satiricism as his elder's. But what we were saying a moment ago means much the same as to say that Mr. Lewis's strength is not in the sense of humor and that he could not clown well if he wished to attempt it. We do not recall what the racial stock is from which Mr. Lewis springs—the Welsh, perhaps—but everyone knows that Mr. Shaw is more than a bit Voltairian and very obstreperously Irish. All Irishmen are.

A moi! A Shaw! A Shaw!

The temptation to enjoy the contrasts presented by the two prize-refusers is, however, seducing us into digression. Mr. Shaw agrees with himself — momentarily, at least—that if Mr. Lewis declared prizes for men of literature to be bad for literature, then Mr. Lewis agrees with Mr. Shaw in his opinion, although whether he does or does not, does not matter. Prizes to writing men *are* bad; Mr. Shaw thinks he has "started something"; and he "hasn't any thoughts on the subject" and eagerly hopes that the press will jump in and get up a good shindy about it. Mr. Shaw has a triple liking for shindies:

Shavian, Hibernian, and publicity-appreciating.

Time was, time is, time shall be

With Mr. Shaw and Mr. Lewis enlisted—but not allied—against prizes for literary men, the subject may be up for an all-round, much-in-earnest, resultless discussion. Don Quixote, it will be remembered, became militant against the windmills; King Canute raised some question concerning the desirability of highwater marks; and more recently something has been said about the effect on fiction of writers' writing with the thought in mind that the stories which pay best are those which will transmute themselves into motion-picture royalties. The discussion has died down, the producers continue to pay best for the stories that are best adapted to filming, and authors continue to write stories that get filmed.

The Dragon is bad—some

Which cynic remarks do not alter the fact that these refusals by Mr. Lewis and Mr. Shaw are a reminder of what every author knows: that writing is its own reward. True, the two Saint Georges happen to have incomes that leave them time and independence to go out and make faces at the Dragon. As for the Dragon, he is a bad dragon—some bad—and he can't go up and down through the world without leaving his trail in the dust, not any more than a garter-snake can.

The thousand-and-first technique

There are as many working-techniques as there are working writers. A thousand writers means a thousand working-techniques; and the thousand-and-first writer employs the thousand-and-first working-technique: his own.

Working-technique is not theory in cold storage, but theory brought out of storage, combined with experience, and put into active use. It is the individual writer's way of doing the job, the practice that he himself follows in procuring the effects that he desires—his own way of managing materials, of arranging and presenting, of putting ideas.

If his writing-idea be within the comprehension- and the response-range of readers, a good working-technique will enable him to develop and present it effectively—to produce in readers the particular reactions of thought and feeling that he desires to produce. But the technique must be a technique that he himself has developed.

Language can aid technique

Usually style has one part in making writing effective, and method, or technique, has another. An author may excel at conceiving ideas, arranging thought, putting materials together, and managing conceptions, and be only so-so at expressing himself, or he may be a dabster at expression and only

so-so at organizing and managing. When he is adept both in organization and management and in style, the gods have smiled on him and the halfgods are much more inclined to send him slips of paper reading "Pay to the order of."

But style does not stand so wholly by itself as never to have a part in organization and management. The Owl has beside him a magazine open to a little story in which the effect of the climactic incident is seriously weakened by one word. The word comes in the last sentence of the preceding incident, the sentence that prepares for the culmination of the story; and it works its ill effect merely by connoting a mood that does not match what is about to take place and mischaracterizes the mood of what has just taken place. Mischoice of this one word has largely frustrated the effect of a well-planned climax.

Words are to be chosen not only for fitness in themselves, but also, not infrequently, for serviceability in furthering the purposes of the technique. The woman who has just schemed her husband into leaving the house so that she may take advantage of him in his absence, does not look after him proudly; she looks after him with relief and probably with some contempt.

A phrasing that makes a mis-go in suggestion interferes with the management as much as the chauffeur does who takes the wrong turn and carries the Queen visitor through the city's slums.

How to use a mean wallop

Ability to take a knock or a wallop is usually part of the moral equipment of the man—or woman—who succeeds in football, boxing, ring fighting, politics, business, cooking, study, or life. The question is, will he take it standing up or lying down, and will he turn to to find and extract benefit in and from it? If he accept it resignedly; if he let it take the heart out of him; if he let it put him into a sullen or stubborn "won't play" or "what's the use" attitude; if being angered he let go of himself and betray a fundamental lack of good sportsmanship;—then goodnight.

If controlling his anger, his disappointment, his discouragement, he set himself to find a way to benefit from the experience, then probably he *will* benefit from it, and not improbably it will become the means of benefit great enough to compensate him fully for the blow. The school of hard knocks enrols us all, but how much we learn depends on how we take the knocks.

All of which is stale—platitudinous—tedious. Woefully so. And yet . . .

When you have "put all you've got" into a manuscript and it starts back to you the day the editor receives it, how do you take the knock? When your coach or adviser writes you about such a manuscript a letter that makes it look as if it had been dragged through a hogtight barbed-wire

fence, how do you take the wallop? Do you give yourself time to cool off, calm down, and get back to normal, then start in to study the criticism and remake the article nearer to the heart's chastened and disciplined desire?

Because if you don't — !

Awatch for the woodsmice

⁂ ⁂ Pete Peters says, "Feller thet said they ain't no royal road to learnin' didn't consider haow dum smart some of us knows we was born. ⁂ "Ebe Davis bet Mel Safford he could learn all the words in the unabridged dictionary an' bought himself a dictionary from the five-an'-ten-cents store to learn 'em from. "

⁂ ⁂ Must a novel always have a plot? Not unless its "story" requires a plot. But it calls for plan, and connected sequence, and a coherent or homogeneous body of material, and must leave with the reader a unified impression. The plan need not be a plot, though a plot is always a plan.

⁂ ⁂ "Unexpectedly meeting a man, with whom she had quarreled some time ago, on the second floor of the Wesson Memorial Hospital in High Street shortly after 7 o'clock last night, Mrs. Josephine Peccarraro of 109 Hancock Street suddenly drew a razor and slashed Antonio Izzo of 349 Walnut Street across the cheek, inflicting a deep but not serious wound." ⁂ Izzo the innocent bystander, or, The place, the time, and the girl.

⁂ ⁂ The tendency of the police to draw daring inferences increases every day:

Three-Story Fall Caused Injuries

Police Satisfied They Know How Frank C. Welch Was Hurt

⁂ ⁂ "Pull" often means nothing more than editorial good will toward an aspiring writer, an opportunity to show it, and a bit of hopeful confidence that its object will presently prove himself equal to the chance the editor is giving him.

⁂ ⁂ No sooner said than dun. Editor, at telephone: ⁂ "That you, Scribblo? Come across, will you; I want you to do an article for me." ⁂ "Come across yourself. I want you to pay for the last one I did." ⁂ ⁂ Add Difficult Decisions: What to do about reporting the check received from Slowpay Magazine after having charged off the amount to bad debts in one's income-tax return.

⁂ ⁂ Thought in place of a New Year's resolution: Thousands do their physical exercises faithfully every day. How many do mental exercises?

The Best Things from PRINTLAND

The Moral Code of the Screen

The necessity for a moral code governing photoplay productions is now universally admitted. How many of those who aspire to write photoplays know just what can and what cannot be shown in the "pictures"?

Frederick James Smith, in a very meaty article in Photoplay Magazine, writes as follows:

The screen has an unwritten moral code to which all motion picture productions are fitted. This screen moral code is as definite as a set of traffic regulations. The photoplay can not turn to the moral left and it must stop at all realism crossings.

It is not possible to blame or praise the producers and directors for this unwritten moral code. It is the result of belief that picture stories must be fitted to the thousands of children who go to the movie theaters every day and whose morals must be preserved. It is, in a large measure, the result of America's own moral and political restrictions.

Sometimes an American-made picture tries to buck these laws. Eric Von Stroheim, the director, has tried time and again. In "The Merry Widow" he made what I consider the most daring scene ever filmed on this side of the water. This is the seduction scene in which the prince pleads with the little dancer in his gilded bedroom while two blindfolded musicians strum a seductive obbligato.

There are five primal items on this unwritten moral code.

The first law concerns what are usually termed immoral relations. There is a curious dividing line here. The films were not permitted to film Michael Arlen's "The Green Hat," in which a reckless woman was promiscuous—and enjoyed it. Yet the screen frequently shows a young woman being forced into immorality either through physical force or to get money for a sick relative. Yet the films can not show immorality as a moral weakness or a psychological case.

The second law revolves around the color line. The films cannot show the love of a negro for a white, or the reverse. The same law applies to the yellow and the brown races. Yet the stage's biggest dramatic hit this year is "Lulu

Belle," which presents the progress of a wholly immoral negro cabaret dancer from Harlem to the Paris apartment of a dissolute French nobleman. "Lulu Belle" will never reach the screen.

It is interesting to point out that one of the most highly praised films ever made, "Broken Blossoms," violated this rule. In Thomas Burke's Limehouse story—and in the subsequent film made by D. W. Griffith—a Chinaman loved a white girl. The canny Mr. Griffith tempered this by painting the Yellow Man as a young dreamer out of tune with harsh realities.

"The Birth of a Nation," the pioneer film to encounter this canon, was barred in many localities for years. It was looked upon as a breeder of race riots, although, as far as I know, there isn't a single record of a riot caused by this film epic. But this superstition discouraged Griffith from carrying out one of his pet dreams, the filming of "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

The third law concerns the presentation of crime. Some of the world's most fascinating fiction has been built upon the lives of dashing criminals. The films can not show crime for its own sake. "The Unholy Three," for instance, was an absorbing melodrama of three side show crooks, but it aroused a lot of opposition during its progress through the country's film theaters. It was looked upon as dangerous in many quarters.

You may never have noticed the fact, but the actual commission of a crime is barred pretty generally. A man may be shot, but the actual firing of the weapon may not be shown. You may see the murderer start to aim his gun, but that's all. This, too, goes for stabbing. You will see the start of a blow but not the finish.

The fourth law bars the facts of life. The spoken drama and the published story have delved into the innermost problems of humanity. The screen apparently cannot do this without crashing against the censors of America.

The three events of existence are birth, marriage and death . . . Only once have the films shown childbirth. Marriage, in the films, is usually the fade-out finish of a story. Its problems are avoided. Death, coming under the ban of unhappy endings, is generally taboo.

The fifth canon is a religious one. The films must not concern themselves with religious controversies. Furthermore, ministers are barred as principal characters. The screen does not permit the presentation of a minister erring seriously in any way.

The minister is barred, except to marry the heroine and the hero in the final fade-out. Or he can be a kindly old adviser. There it ends.

The screen long dodged "The White Sister" because of fancied religious complications.

The recently produced version of Hawthorne's "The Scarlet Letter" is an example of dodging this issue.

Will Hays, the czar of filmdom, has just added a new canon to the code of the screen. Drinking is prohibited on the theory that the national prohibition laws have made it illegal.—*The Photoplay.*

Success in Writing

Writers live under a lucky star today. Never before have there been so many brilliant opportunities for the individual engaged in literary work. Editors everywhere tell us that the demand for short stories, special articles and other magazine material is far greater than the supply at hand.

The business of writing offers pleasant work and the opportunity to reap big returns to the man or woman who can conform with the requirements of the task. The above statements, and the following article from The Outline of Success, published by the Encyclopedia Britannica Corporation, will be of interest:

We are a nation of insatiable readers. Education is all but universal. Publishers are on every hand. New magazines reach the newsstands almost every month. The daily paper is as much a necessity as our daily bread. Every sort of taste is served, from the scholarly to the melodramatic, from that for "confessions" stories to that which demands the scientific article. It would seem as though the demand would absorb all the writing being done in the country today.

Yet writing is a highly selective art. All of us who are educated at all have the first tools in our hands —words and the sheer mechanical ability to write them down. Writing, to the man outside, looks like the easiest work on earth: we all have to use words to talk, so it can't be much trouble to string them out on paper; the free-lance writer is his own man, he travels or loafs away two-thirds of his time, and writes in the spare moments—making enough, of course, for a life of more travel and loafing. Famous writers, the average reader has heard, get fabulous sums per word. As a consequence of these current illusions the editorial offices of the country are flooded with inexpert, unbeautiful, unimaginative copy written by those whose main intention in writing is to make money in the easiest way.

As a matter of fact, writing is one of the hardest of the professions. It takes a mature mind to be its own taskmaster. Everyone who has struggled through to success in writing has found out for himself that a clearly developed and firmly observed system is the only way to independence and recognition. But the rewards of writing *are* enormous, and well worth the lifetime of service that the real writer is glad to give for them.

Given the love of words and the willingness to put all the hours of effort into the work that can be wrung out of the day, given sympathy and the desire to know what one's fellow man does and why he does it, given an insatiable friendly curiosity and the ability to perceive shades of difference and likeness, writing will repay you a hundred times.

Next to these natural qualifications come the tools: paper, pencils or a typewriter; the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Then an honest, practicable sys-

tem. A writer, the behaviorists tell us, is one who writes. Not nearly so obvious as it sounds at first hearing. We are fortunate if we do not number at least one non-writing "writer" among our acquaintances—the man who has always intended to get around to trying his luck some day, or the spasmodic worker with a few scattered stories to his credit, or the woman who has always felt that if she could only write down what life has done to her she would be very quickly famous.

A different system is indicated for every variation of temperament, but that there should be a regularity about one's writing is admitted by every recognized author today. One inspired instructor of young writers used to tell his students that if they had to work in stores and offices for a roof and food, their only salvation was to rise two hours early and write until time to go to work. One famous woman writer is at her typewriter eight hours a day for six weeks at a time; after which, for two weeks, she never goes near her desk, but talks, reads, sees her friends and renews her interest in living. Her output is enormous, and since she has the good sense and ready intelligence to get back continually to the common life where she can find out what the men and women she writes for are interested in, she could readily sell twice as much as she is able to finish.

The writer of any grade is under an obligation to see a little more clearly, think a little more deeply, have a truer sense of form and balance than the average busy reader has time for. It is precisely when he is able to interpret our life, give us a running commentary on social trends, show us how and why we live and feel and think as we do, that his rewards are most certain. —*The Outline of Success.*

The Essayist and His Competition

The writer, as well as the farmer, may justly complain against a tariff, for not only does he have to compete with foreign producers but he must equal the wares of authors who have lived any time during the past 20 or more centuries, especially if he chances to be an essayist and writes personal material, according to Samuel McChord Crothers in the current International Book Review.

"There is no chronological development in the essay," Dr Crothers writes, "because it is a form of literature the value of which lies in personality. One instantly gets on friendly terms with Montaigne and thinks of him as a contemporary. It is just as easy to pick up a volume of Charles Lamb as it is to read an article in the latest magazine.

"This is, of course, hard on living writers, who must meet the competition of the best men of other generations. But there are no tariff walls for the protection of the home market. Though this may be discouraging to the producer, it is to the

advantage of the ultimate consumer of literature.

"Though the scholarly essay is not attractive to the general reader, there are thorough scholars who are also happy essayists. They have learned the art of giving us the results of their studies without suggesting the processes by which their knowledge was acquired.

"And in any magazine or newspaper one may happen upon an article that has a quality that arrests attention. We find that it is not only worth reading once, but that it invites re-reading. It is not only good journalism, but it is good literature. We should like to have it in some permanent form."

—*Springfield Union & Republican*

Who's the Ghost?

A discussion has arisen over the ethics of "ghost writing." The practice is old but the phrase is new. Variety—a weekly periodical—is given credit for applying the term. It means the publication of books and articles ostensibly written by celebrities and signed by them, but actually put into English by some clever newspaper man.

This has been done for years. In the United States many men and women attain prominence without the aid of an education. If the number of actual illiterates in high places could be published, the school system would get a setback in the eyes of youth. These men and women are often exceedingly capable, but they cannot write. They have a story to tell, of course. They "talk" it and a clever writer sets it down.

There is really no objection to "ghost writing" unless the authors sail under false colors. Lately the practice has arisen of giving credit where it is due. Thus "To-Day and To-Morrow," by Henry Ford, bears the line "in collaboration with Samuel Crowther." This is as it should be.

But there are numerous instances in which a public man who cannot write suddenly appears with a book written in flowing, scholarly English. And in some lonely garret, pecking away at a typewriter with his bony hands, sits the "ghost"—providing the vocabulary.

However, lest some reader begins to weep here, or to start a fund for "ghost writers," let me say that most of the "ghosts" are well paid for their labor; in fact, some are paid excessively. Many of them are press agents; and sometimes advertising agents provide the books.

Unless this is stated on the title page the public knows nothing about it. Even reviewers go astray and discuss learnedly the style of a man whose "ain'ts" and "don'ts" are the despair of his wife.

I recall reviewing a few years ago an able book written by an American Army officer who had taken part in the war. It gave no inkling that he was not a writing man. Later a novelist wrote me that he had been very busy writing this officer's book.

An able press agent can dig up a most marvelous past for a pub-

lic man at a moment's notice. The story is told of a celebrity, now deceased, who gave a blanket order to a writer to produce whatever he felt like, in order to take advantage of a fat contract. When the stories appeared even their reputed author read them with amazement. He found that he had been witty and clever when still in the cradle.

Of course we are glad to read the opinions of men who have made good. But why not let them say so in their own words? Would any one want Will Rogers' comments brushed up by a Columbia undergraduate?

However, the best joke of all is on audiences who sit through speeches by celebrities. The next time you attend a banquet look for the "ghost writer." He may be the man who is holding the great one's coat and hat.

There is an agency in New York City which will furnish at a moment's notice a speech on every conceivable subject. A writer who had been asked to speak in Jersey discovered on the list a lecture labeled "H. L. Mencken" and another "Stuart P. Sherman." He ordered both, and in despair gave half of each. They had to call out the Hoboken Fire Department.—HARRY HANSEN, in *The New York World.*

The Good Bad Realist

It was possible, of course (the Kansas City Star quotes a Frenchman as saying) that as a result of his book, his name would be covered with opprobrium, and those who really knew him would be greatly surprised. For as a matter of fact there is no more upright and honorable man than this daring philosopher. He is so honest that it would never occur to him to shortchange anyone by as little as a sou, or to take two Metro tickets for the price of one, or to conceal the exact number of cakes eaten in a pastry shop, or to falsify his income tax return. This is to say, he deserves, by the breadth and culture of his mind, the worthy title of honest man as our forefathers understood the term.

Voltaire in his Ferney garden. That's what you thought of as you saw him strolling about his little place on the outskirts of Paris, peacefully inspecting his melon patch or picking bugs off the potatoes.

And this is the man (continues the ironist) whom the old ladies will doubtless accuse of having perpetrated a literary horror. It is rather odd that it should always be thus. All pornographers, all those, at least, whom we stigmatize as such, have a way of impressing us, when we meet them, by the sweetness and purity of their lives. All have six children, an honest wife, a fat cook, and a chambermaid who wears spectacles. Always they receive us with gentle courtesy and give us poundcake without any rum in it and—what a holiday!—take us out for a drive behind an ass.

Now we have met, unfortunately, very few of the eminent writers who make it their task to puff moral preachments for public consumption. But such as we have

met were all of the sly old dog type. One or two of them, they assured us, had smashed glasses at Maxim's. Another, who tells his readers that newborn children are found among the cabbages, was picked up one morning among the carrots in the city market and taken home.

Needless to say, all have been twice divorced, and those who do not habitually get drunk seem to have married concierges who are drug addicts.

Under such conditions, what to do? *Mon Dieu,* do as we do—refuse henceforth to meet authors. Flee from them. Avoid them. Never be seen in their company. You know how the Government, which knows them, treated them the day Anatole France was buried.

What Is Honor? A Word

Few people have entered the halls of fame with briefer credentials than Annie Oakley. What could she do? She could shoot. Yet she came along at a time when we were ready to make her a symbol of that stirring frontier which was already vanishing over the horizon; and so, with her employer, Buffalo Bill, she caused something to leap to life within us, and so became a romantic figure.

Through a curious circumstance, her name will endure long after her shooting is forgotten. For wherever free passes are issued to shows in this country they will be known as "Annie Oakleys," or more briefly, as "Oakleys." The origin of this use of her name is in doubt. Some say Ben Johnson started it; some say it arose when thirty-seven gentlemen, all claiming to be brothers of the sharpshooter, showed up at Madison Square Garden one night, demanding admission, which they got; others say it arose when passes for children were issued at one time at the Garden, these all bearing Annie Oakley's picture. Whatever the truth is, passes are "Oakleys" to most of us because they usually bear four neat .32-calibre punch holes, exactly like the holes Annie used to drill through playing cards when she was performing.

Well, to get into the language is a rare honor, John Hancock did it, and so did Steve Brodie. Of such pungent stuff is the American language made. — *The New York World.*

The Light Novel

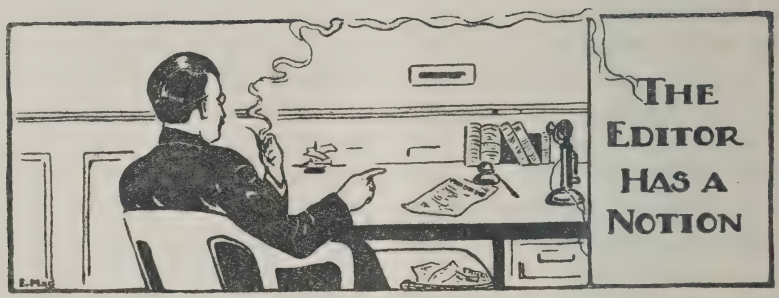
There are four distinct varieties of the "popular," or "light," novel —to wit: the romantic novel (dealing with young love, and ending generally either at the hymeneal altar or with a prenuptial embrace); the novel of adventure (in which physical action and danger are the chief constituents: sea stories, Wild-West yarns, odysseys of the African wilds, etc.); the mystery novel (wherein much of the dramatic suspense is produced by hidden forces that are not revealed until the denouement: novels of diplomatic intrigue, international plottings, secret societies, crime, pseudo science, and the like); and the detective novel. These types

often overlap in content, and at times become so intermingled in subject-matter that one is not quite sure in which category they primarily belong. But though they may borrow devices and appeals from one another, and usurp one another's distinctive material, they follow, in the main, their own special subject, and evolve within their own boundaries.

Of these four kinds of literary entertainment the detective novel is the youngest, the most complicated, the most difficult of construction, and the most distinct. It is, in fact, almost *sui generis*, and, except in its more general structural characteristics, has little in common with its fellows—the romantic, the adventurous, and the mystery novel. In one sense, to be sure, it is a highly specialized offshoot of the last named; but the relationship is far more distant than the average reader imagines. —WILLARD HUNTINGTON WRIGHT, in *Scribner's Magazine*.

What Not to Do in Detective Stories

G. K. Chesterton, in his introduction to "The Wrong Letter," by Walter S. Masterman, gives a list of many of the devices that have now come to be regarded as antiquated. He says: "The things he [Mr. Masterman] does not do are the things being done everywhere today to the destruction of true detective fiction and the loss of this legitimate and delightful form of art. He does not introduce into the story a vast but invisible secret society with branches in every part of the world, with ruffians who can be brought in to do anything, or underground cellars that can be used to hide anybody. He does not mar the pure and lovely outlines of a classical murder or burglary by wreathing it round and round with the dirty and dingy red tape of international diplomacy; he does not lower our lofty ideals of crime to the level of foreign politics. He does not introduce suddenly at the end somebody's brother from New Zealand, who is exactly like him. He does not trace the crime hurriedly in the last page or two to some totally insignificant character, whom we never suspected because we never remembered. He does not get over the difficulty of choosing between the hero and the villain by falling back on the hero's cabman or the villain's valet. He does not introduce a professional criminal to take the blame of a private crime; a thoroughly unsportsmanlike course of action, and another proof of how professionalism is ruining our national sense of sport. He does not introduce about six people in succession to do little bits of the same small murder: one man to bring the dagger, and another to point it, and another to stick it in properly. He does not say it was all a mistake, and that nobody ever meant to murder anybody at all, to the serious disappointment of all humane and sympathetic readers. . . ."



In a little-known book by James Russell Lowell, "Conversations on Some of the Old Poets," the author says: "Nature should lead the poet by the hand, and he has far better things to do than to busy himself in counting the warts upon it. . . . A cup of water from Hippocrene, tasting, as it must, of innocent pastoral sights and sounds, of the bleat of lambs, of the shadows of leaves and flowers that have leaned over it, of the rosy hands of children whose privilege it ever is to paddle in it, of the the low words of lovers who have walked by its side in the moonlight, of the tears of the poor Hagars of the world who have drunk of it, would choke a satirist. His thoughts of the country must have a savor of Jack Ketch, and see no beauty but in a hemp field. Poetry is something to make us wiser and better by continually revealing those types of beauty and truth which God has set in all men's souls; not by picking out the petty faults of our neighbors to make a mock of."

All this, to be sure, was written of a poet, long dead and now little read except in snatches, whose rapier-thrusts of wit were pointed now in venom, now in satire—Alexander Pope. And Lowell himself is read, alas, by only the scholarly few, and in schools where "The Vision of Sir Launful" is taught to those who are preparing for college. But the Editor has a notion that the stuff that poetry is made of must needs have more light than gloom, more gossamer than rags, more wine than hemlock, if it is to point men to paths that lead upward.

The September report of the Editor's notions contained a quotation from Jeffery Farnol's "Peregrine's Progress"—one of his poems, attributed to a character of the story. Professor A. R. Philippe, *Licencié-en-Lettres,* University of Paris, of East Stroudsburg, Penna., was so impressed with the simple charm of Mr. Farnol's poem that he longed to see it in his native language. He says:

"I found these verses so beautiful, so euphonious, and so like French poesy, that I attempted to translate them. Very hard work! Our masculine and feminine, our strict poetic rules, hinder making an exact translation—if one wants to keep the form and not change the construction.

"However, I am sending you what I have done. Being myself a writer, I should be glad to read my verses translated into another tongue; and I thought that perhaps you would be interested in seeing how this lovely thing would appear in a Romance language, so rich in descriptive phrases. I should be glad to read my little composition some day in your interesting magazine.

"Yours very truly,

"A. R. Philippe."

Many readers of this department will doubtless share the Editor's pleasure in comparing Mr. Farnol's original with a graceful and sympathetic translation into French, so here are the two sets of verses, side by side.

When night comes down, where'er I be
I want no roof to shelter me;
I love to lie where I may see
The blessed stars.

Though I am one not over-wise,
They seem to me like friendly eyes
That watch us kindly from the skies,
These winking stars.

Though I've no friend to share my woe,
And bitter tears unseen may flow
To soothe my grief, I silent go
To tell the stars.

And when my time shall come to die
I care not where my flesh shall lie,
Because I know my soul shall fly
Back to the stars!

Quand les nuits descendent, obscures,
Fi du lieu chaud, du clos endroit,
Vous seulement....vous pour mon toit:
Etoiles pures.

Bien qu'indigne de vos lumières,
Vous me semblez des yeux amis
Veillant sur nous des cieux bénis:
Etoiles claires.

Aucun compagnon, dans mes plaintes,
N'essuie, des pleurs, mes yeux enflés;
Qui les tarit, si ce n'est les
Etoiles saintes?

Et quand j'aurai, d'un mort, les voiles,
Peu m'importe où mon corps sera
Car je sais que mon âme ira
Vers les étoiles!

(All Rights Reserved)

These verses and their interesting translation bring to mind what is, the Editor has a notion, the finest published poem ever written by an American Negro—Paul Laurence Dunbar's "Ere Sleep Comes Down to Soothe the Weary Eyes." In simplicity, rhythm and tender poetic quality they are literally unsurpassed by the poems of any American poets who have essayed a similar theme, and the last stanza—quoted later herein—is worthy of Tennyson at his best.

The poem is to be found in one of Dunbar's volumes of collected verse, "Lyrics of Lowly Life"—the book that contains "When Malindy Sings," which on the lips of public reciters has delighted so many audiences for a generation.

Some of our older readers will recall that when the Negro poet first came into such prominence—in 1895—that his work deserved a permanent form, "Lyrics of Lowly Life" was accorded considerable acclaim, not only by reason of its intrinsic merit but also because it was prefaced with an appreciative introduction by William Dean Howells. The poem is given in full on the succeeding page.

ERE SLEEP COMES DOWN TO SOOTHE THE WEARY EYES

Ere sleep comes down to soothe the weary eyes,
Which all the day with ceaseless care have sought
The magic gold which from the seeker flies;
Ere dreams put on the gown and cap of thought,
And made the waking world a world of lies,—
Of lies most palpable, uncouth, forlorn,
That say life's full of aches and tears and sighs,—
Oh, how with more than dreams the soul is torn,
Ere sleep comes down to soothe the weary eyes.

Ere sleep comes down to soothe the weary eyes,
How all the griefs and heartaches we have known
Come up like pois'nous vapors that arise
From some base witch's caldron, when the crone,
To work some potent spell, her magic plies.
The past which held its share of bitter pain,
Whose ghost we prayed that Time might exorcise,
Comes up, is lived and suffered o'er again,
Ere sleep comes down to soothe the weary eyes.

Ere sleep comes down to soothe the weary eyes,
What phantoms fill the dimly lighted room;
What ghostly shades in awe-creating guise
Are bodied forth within the teeming gloom.
What echoes faint of sad and soul-sick cries,
And pangs of vague inexplicable pain
That pay the spirit's ceaseless enterprise,
Come thronging through the chambers of the brain,
Ere sleep comes down to soothe the weary eyes.

Ere sleep comes down to soothe the weary eyes,
Where ranges forth the spirit far and free?
Through what strange realms and unfamiliar skies
Tends her far course to lands of mystery?
To lands unspeakable—beyond surmise,
Where shapes unknowable to being spring,
Till, faint of wing, the Fancy fails and dies
Much wearied with the spirit's journeying,
Ere sleep comes down to soothe the weary eyes.

Ere sleep comes down to soothe the weary eyes,
How questioneth the soul that other soul,—
The inner sense which neither cheats nor lies,
But self exposes unto self, a scroll
Full writ with all life's acts unwise or wise,
In characters indelible and known;
So, trembling with the shock of sad surprise,
The soul doth view its awful self alone,
Ere sleep comes down to soothe the weary eyes.

When sleep comes down to seal the weary eyes,
The last dear sleep whose soft embrace is balm,
And whom sad sorrow teaches us to prize
For kissing all our passions into calm,
Ah, then, no more we heed the sad world's cries,
Or seek to probe th' eternal mystery,
Or fret our souls at long-withheld replies,
At glooms through which our visions cannot see,
When sleep comes down to seal the weary eyes.

When the Writer Reads

Adventures in Editing

Charles Hanson Towne is best known to the public by his manifold writings, and especially his excellent poems, but to the inner magazine world he is equally distinguished as an editor. In this latter career he embarked at the tender but ambitious age of eleven when, in conjunction with a young friend who supplied the pictures, he conceived and produced —but did not establish!—The Unique Monthly. "Only one copy of each issue could be produced, because of the pictures." From that time on he was doomed to be an editor, and that he has borne up bravely under the weight of destiny is shown in every page of this delightful book. The narrative sparkles with reminiscence and anecdote, for it is altogether to be expected of editorial ventures and adventures that they should concern themselves intimately with literary celebrities and near-celebrities. Quite as much for its frequent sidelights on writers and their joys and pains as because of its story of a successful editor's career this volume will be widely welcomed. A score of illustrations well supplement the text. D. Appleton and Co., New York, ix+239 pages.

The Best College Stories, 1924-'25

Dr. Henry T. Schnittkind and Horace C. Baker have edited a volume of some 360 pages containing their selection of stories by college students. The names of the undergraduate periodicals from which the stories have been taken indicate the range of selection, territorially: Barnard Barnacle, Boston College Stylus, Converse College Concept, Cornell Husk, De Pauw Magazine, Harvard Advocate, Hunter College Echo, Marietta College Olio, Mount Holyoke Monthly, U. of California Occident, U. of Michigan Inlander, U. of Richmond Messenger, and the U. of Utah Pen. The recent contest conducted by The Writer's Monthly shows, even if these stories did not, that the grade of fiction written by contemporary undergraduates is surprisingly good. A knowledge of life, it seems, can nowadays be obtained vicariously, or else our young people are quite able to instruct their elders in what, for want of a more explicit single word, we term "sophistica-

tion." At all events, this is an interesting collection. The Stratford Company, Boston.

The Scenewright

The Little Theatre has become a force in the land. Its effect on the commercial stage has been great. Many playwrights would have had no chance for their experiments in form and setting had not the Little Theatre supplied the opportunity. The ambitious young playwright may through membership in a Little Theatre group study plays in the making—a great advantage.

The modern stage is increasingly dependent on its settings and lighting effects; and the all-around playwright will find much to interest him in "The Scenewright." The book simply and clearly, step by step, instructs the reader how to draw stage diagrams, make complete models, plan the entire stage arrangements, and how to carry out the designs effectively and economically. It is not at all a book for the advanced worker, but its simplicity and clear statement make it decidedly worthwhile for the creative playwright who lacks the technical knowledge to conceive his play in terms of the theatre. Macmillan Company, New York.

The Best Plays of 1925-26

This yearly review of the stage is of much importance to playwrights, because it chronicles American stage history fully, views in a sensible way the trend of things theatrical, and gives in somewhat abbreviated form, but with enough of the dialogue for study, ten "leading plays" of the season. Burns Mantle, the compiler, uses both the box-office test and the critical test in selecting plays for these annual volumes. The trend of the theatre toward intimate psychological problems is shown in the plays chosen for inclusion: "Craig's Wife," by George Kelly; "The Great God Brown," by Eugene O'Neill; "The Green Hat," by Michael Arlen; "The Dybbuk," by S. Ansky; "The Enemy," by Channing Pollock; "The Last of Mrs. Cheyney," by Frederick Lonsdale; "Bride of the Lamb," by William Hurlbart; "The Wisdom Tooth," by Marc Connelly; "The Butter and Egg Man," by George Kaufman; and "Young Woodley," by John Van Druten. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York.

Training for Authorship

That Grenville Kleiser thought well of the headline used by the publishers of this magazine for years in their advertising is shown by his adopting it as the title for his book, "Training for Authorship." In somewhat more than 600 large pages the author essays to give "instruction in every important phase of authorship." Seven chapters are devoted to short-story writing, but only one each to "How to Write a Novel" (20 pages), "The Writing of Essays" (20 pages), "How to Write History" (22 pages), "How to

Write Biography" (20 pages), and "How to Write a Scenario for a Photoplay" (32 pages). There are also chapters on "Word-Building," "Sentence-Making," "Phrase-Making," and other matters of language and style. The chapters are followed by exercises for the convenience of those who wish to use the book as a private text, for it is inconceivable that any sensible instructor in a college would attempt in a single course to cover the whole range of authorship.

The chapters on words, phrases, and similes are by far the best part of this—literally—pretentious volume, chiefly because much of the rest is a rewriting of what certain standard works on fiction have presented years ago. Funk & Wagnalls Co., New York.

The Market That Buys

Archie Joscelyn

Adaptation Should be One of the Writer's Most Constant Standbys

YOU, being Mr., Miss or Mrs. Average Writer, will of course have on hand several stories that you know are good, stories that should sell to some one of a group of magazines, but stories which, having gone the rounds, have none the less completed the circle in each instance. At present, you are out your work and postage. What to do? as the French say.

A hint that has been a money-maker for me, with both stories and articles, is to find a different field for the story. Many stories for adults, if altered as to love-interest, but retaining its essentially good home, business or adventure plot, will sell readily to the young people's publications such as Classmate, Young People's Weekly, etc. There are nearly a dozen markets in this field.

Of course the story must be good for this field as for any other. But frequently it is naturally more adapted to this field than to the one in which it has been offered. Study the weekly papers—most of the publishers in this field will gladly send samples—and see if such an adaptation will not solve your problem in many such cases.

Articles written for boys' papers will often sell to farm or sporting magazines, and vice-versa. A number of fields are widely divergent, yet akin in some respects. One writer who sells a lot of material on trapping to a sporting magazine that pays a low rate not long ago had some of the same sort in the Saturday Evening Post! If one market-group will not buy, study the others. It pays.

Today's Housewife, 18 East 18 St., New York, offers a monthly prize of five dollars for the best letter received, containing helpful suggestions and criticisms. Name and address of winner is published each month. Address letter to Suggestion Department of the magazine.

Capper's Farmer, Topeka, Kansas, offers a monthly contest for a last line to complete a limerick, which is always illustrated. First prize, ten dollars, and ten other cash prizes.

The Household, Topeka, Kansas, runs a similar limerick contest.

Household, and Capper's Farmer also offer prizes for the best titles for their cover pictures. A first prize of $10 and ten other cash prizes are awarded. The contests close the last day of each month.

The Farmer's Wife, St. Paul, Minn., offers a first prize of ten dollars each month for the best letter published, and three dollars each for all other letters used. They furnish a list of seventy-three subjects, which may be had for the asking, and particulars of the contest.—E. T. Y.

The Dairy Farmer, Des Moines, Ia., runs a page in each issue called "All Round the Farm". Labor-saving farm and dairy ideas are used. Two dollars is paid for each one printed. They also use cooking recipes, paying a dollar for each one used. I have found the company very prompt and honest to deal with.—F. C.

To those who find the newspapers the source of an occasional check, the needs of the various publications often is disregarded, with the consequent result that they find the check altogether too "occasional".

The Christian Science Monitor, Boston, pays for material used, at the rate of 50 cents an inch, which amounts virtually to a cent a word. They have limited space, though, and select their material carefully. News about general upbuilding seems to be the most preferred. Features also are acceptable occasionally. Crime and accident stories are never used. As I understand it, the best opportunity with them comes with being appointed a correspondent at some

point. Their international circulation prevents them from using any syndicated material—in other words, copy must be written especially for them.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, early Sunday edition, always is in the market for "brief news features with an unusual angle." It pays one-third cent a word. Good photographs are used occasionally.

Some time ago the New York Evening Graphic advised that they paid ½c a word for news and $15 a page for magazine articles, with photographs. They asked for human-interest stories involving deep emotion. Seeking to be a journal of liberal opinion, they were particularly interested in any situations based on bigotry or intolerance.—R. A.

Not long ago I was greatly at a loss for a typewriter table. No table or desk in the house was always available—all were too high anyway—and besides, I needed something portable because of light and other conditions. I craved a regular office portable table, but the price——!

By good luck, I chanced just then on a sale of telephone sets—tables and stools—and I bought one. The table was of oak, 31 inches high, the top 14 inches square, simple and sturdy. I sawed off the legs and put on ball-bearing casters, making it just 24 inches high, which, when I sat in a comfortable chair, allowed my forearms to be level, as in playing a piano—the least fatiguing position for work.

The shelf for the telephone book, 8 inches below the top, was in the way of my knees, so I had it sawed out about half way back in a big U, not weakening it any as a brace for the table legs. I could have moved it up, but I wanted it low, to keep my pile of blank paper on. The finished sheets I keep at one side on the little stool, which can be slipped under the table out of the way.

Now this could be improved upon. In fact, the man-of-the-house offered to make drop, or sliding, shelves on each side of the top —and he may do it!

I can write for a considerable length of time on this small table without tiring, because it is adjusted exactly to my height, can be shifted to follow the light all day long, and can be moved easily, work and all, to the quietest room when occasion demands.

Upon seeing mine, a friend made a table from an old piano stool, but mine is more rigid and has the advantage of the shelf room.—E. M. L.

Author & Journalist, 1839 Champa St., Denver, Colo., in returning an article, explained: "We are always so full up that the test of the manuscript is not, 'Can we use it?' but, 'Is this so important that we positively must make a place for it?'" Just another proof that very few markets are hopelessly closed; it depends on how desirable the offering is.

The Educational Screen, 5 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill., has a very courteous editor. He is not

authorized to pay for articles, but he was very complimentary to me, and regreted deeply that I would not permit him to use my "Motion Pictures and Ideals" without remuneration.

The new magazine, Children, the Magazine for Parents, 353 Fourth Ave., New York, seems to require exceptionally simple treatment in its articles. A paper of mine on easy stunts for the children, written as lucidly as I could, was rejected as "too didactic". The editor said: "We vision our audience as parents of high school education, and all material must be popularly and simply presented."

Homecrofter, 390 Cliff St., Battle Creek, Mich., wrote me thus: "Homecrofter does not pay for manuscript. It goes to thousands of readers of the very best class, but gets most of its material from other leading magazines."

Muscle Builder, 1926 Broadway, New York, has been discontinued as an individual publication, and will now be made a part of Physical Culture—probably a very small part. Presumably the Physical Culture rate of 2 cents a word will now be paid for material that formerly would have gone into the smaller magazine.

Field & Stream, 25 West 45th St., New York, is not buying as liberally as it used to. All the department editors on this periodical are specialists in their lines, and an article has to be very good indeed to get by. One cent a word is paid promptly on acceptance.

Strength, 2737 N. Palethorp St., Philadelphia, Pa., is practically a closed market. I believe that I can write their kind of "dope" as well as any writer in the country, and it is but rarely that I can make 'em take anything. About the same names appear on the contents page month after month. A cent a word or a little less is paid, usually after publication.

Open Road, 248 Boylston Ave., Boston, Mass., has been listed as paying 1 cent a word on acceptance, but none of the checks I have had from it reach that, and reports have been very slow.

Violin World, 125 W. 42nd St., New York, no longer offers the outsider a chance; and Musical Observer, Cooper Square, New York, reports itself overstocked. Etude, Philadelphia, is the only musical magazine that offers attractive rates, and even in this case the writer waits for publication.—L. E. E.

Being a housekeeper as well as having literary aspirations, I have found that one job can get happy pointers from the other.

For holding papers together—absolutely holding them so that nothing slips or is lost, and so that no mark is left on the paper—there is nothing that equals the ordinary pinch or spring clothespin. My work is often interrupted, hence it must be arranged so that every spare minute can be used to advantage. Having papers secure in this way and still ready for the pen is of real value. There is also room to print on the wood of the clothes-

pin what each group of papers represents, so that one glance is sufficient to locate the work wanted. A bit of fine sandpaper will smooth all roughnesses, and, if desired, enamel paint will save these homemade clips from permanently soiling.

A personal letter from Sunset, San Francisco, gave me a thrill and soothed my ruffled spirit for a number of plain rejections.

"Thank you very much for letting us see your verses, which we regret we can not make room for in the magazine under present conditions. Our verse files are bulging with material for which we cannot find space."

Henry T. Schnittkind, of Stratford Magazine, also sends a personal letter when rejecting manuscript and does not ignore a friendly criticism.—E. C. R.

I have discovered an apparently inexhaustible supply of scratch paper. Seeing a member of an office force using the reverse side of old bill heads very freely for his scribblings set me to thinking—and then to inquiring. I found a great lot of such old paper going to waste, some of it the best bond paper, which is pleasant to handle and write on. The office folk referred to dug up for me what seemed to be "tons" of such paper out of warehouses and store-rooms, where it had accumulated, much of it long forgotten, for many firms are not good housecleaners. They sold to me in preference to the junk man, and also gave me some. The paper consisted of old bill heads, letter heads, price lists, lists of goods, order sheets, and what not—all obsolete and of virtually no value to them, but extremely valuable to me because one side of the paper was clean and usable. I procured enough to last me and my family all the days of our lives, and then some. One firm had a lot of particularly good bill heads and lists left from a business in which they had failed years and years ago. This seems a valuable suggestion to members of the H.C.S., for almost any failure or bankruptcy will leave a quantity of such paper available. It would pay to ask a junk man to keep on the watch for some, if you don't care to approach a business house direct to ask for it. One large car-building company near here is "wise to" such waste. It has all old order sheets made into tablets for the use of the office men.—E. M. L.

In a personal interview, the editor of the short-story department of the Chicago Daily News told me that they were buying only about fifteen stories a month at present, as they are trying to use up the large number they have accumulated. She also told me that the policy of the paper was to use shorter stories, 1000 words being the length preferred.—M. R. J.

To the beginner who really has something to say and has learned in a measure how to say it, the salesmen's magazines offer an attractive field. They are easy to

please, pay a fair price, and are cordial in their welcome to the new writer. It is not necessary that the writer have had experience as a salesman in order to handle their themes, for these publications use a wide range of material, but sales experience is undoubtedly an asset to the contribution.

Specialty Salesman Magazine, South Whitley, Ind., uses fiction, humor, articles and some verse. Although the editors will send a circular describing their needs to new writers, a study of the magazine itself furnishes a better guide to its editorial policy. A recent communication says in part:"....for the salesman, the important thing is the viewpoint from which he looks at life, the courage with which he tackles life's problems, the sincerity with which he goes about his work. Less technique and more man-building inspiration is what we want. It need not be about salesmen, though we like to make a salesman the hero when it will not spoil the real purpose of the article or story." Incidentally, if the writer is able to hand out a good, healthy chuckle or laugh along with this order, he will not want for a sale at from one-half cent to a cent a word, on acceptance.

The Independent Agent and Salesman, 22 East Twelfth Street, Cincinnati, covers the next division of the field, that of a little more theoretical nature in relation to ways and methods. The editor also uses some verse, a little fiction, interviews with salesmen when there is something of news or story-value in their achievements, and runs a few pages of "experiences" each month. This periodical formerly paid for contributions on the tenth of the month following publication, but recently my checks have been coming on the tenth of the month following acceptance. The editor, W. E. Backus, is very pleasant in his dealings, and will sometimes suggest timely articles to fit his needs.

How to Sell, Mt. Morris, Ill., tells by its name the policy of its editors. Incidentally, material was formerly paid for on publication, but of late, payment on acceptance seems to be the rule.

On The Air, a radio magazine published at Mt. Morris, Ill., acknowledges a manuscript almost before it comes to rest on the editor's desk. This acknowledgment is in the form of a personal letter from the editor, advising of the manuscript's arrival, and stating that the editor will look it over when time is less pressing.

—H. V. H.

The advisability of keeping everything one ever writes was impressed upon me in two ways not long ago.

When I was fifteen I wrote a novel about a beautiful girl who clerked in a city department store. I told at length of her many temptations, final triumph and marriage to a young millionaire who had first seen her while shopping with his mother. Imagine! As I lived in a small town, had never been in a de-

partment store or seen a millionaire, nor been tempted to do anything worse than kiss a bashful boy while playing postoffice, nothing more useless than this first brain child of mine could be imagined. But I saved it. And the heroine of that story helped me out later. She was delicate, fainted on every occasion and was sent to the country to recuperate. Not knowing what to do with her while in the country I had the old lady with whom she boarded relate tales of her own childhood and girlhood for the entertainment of her guest. These experiences which had been told me by my own grandmother proved of infinite value to me many years later when writing a series of childrens' stories of that period. But now for the other side.

In a fit of discouragement I destroyed an article that I had been greatly interested in writing but for which I had failed to find a market. Then a well known magazine asked for material along the very line of this article which had required a great deal of research. I went to work over exactly the same ground and a second article, differently arranged, but containing the same information as the first, sold. So you see!

A series of letters sent with unavailable stories for children gave me many helpful hints that I would like to pass on to others of The Writer's Monthly family.

For instance, a children's story in which George Washington appeared was returned because of a hesitancy to use a story built around so great a historical character. Another came back because the sacrifice made by a little girl, while considered fine in itself, (she let another go to a Fourth of July celebration in her place) would perhaps distress younger readers who would find difficulty in grasping its full value. In a third story a little girl repeated something she had heard at home, and this was considered the story's handicap, that she did not know better than to talk so indiscreetly. Another story was refused because a change of mind must be based on some other motive than fear. The seat of action of an accepted story was changed from a church to a town hall as being more reverent. Other points emphasized were that children like much detail, are fond of humor, but do not care for too much emotion.

The first person narrative, or the story within a story, are neither one popular with young readers, seeming to be less real to them.

The Country Gentleman, Philadelphia, Pa., returned a story because, "the picture it gives of farm life is too drab and uninspring for our use."—S. C. S.

The Writer's Monthly

A Journal for All Who Write

Edited by
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IMPORTANT NOTICES

Change of address must reach the publishers before the fifteenth of the month preceding issue, otherwise no number can be duplicated. Subscribers must give old address when sending in the new, specifically addressing the notice to The Writer's Monthly.

Return postage must accompany all regular articles intended for publication.

In no case can short items for the Departments be returned if unavailable.

Notice of accepted material will be sent promptly with payment on acceptance. However, items for "Experience Meeting" will be paid for only in shorter or longer subscriptions to *The Writer's Monthly*, to be sent to any desired person. Items of news will not be paid for.

Vol. XXIX JANUARY No. 1

THE WRITER'S MONTHLY is peculiarly fortunate in the loyalty of its readers. Not only have thousands of them been taking the magazine for at least ten years, but these "old subscribers" as well as its newer readers, if we may judge from a gratifying flow of appreciative letters, feel a real interest in our growth in the service field that we have entered.

In all these years it has never been our policy to pester our friends by importuning them for favors, but now there is a kindness that many of them can do at no outlay of either effort or time, and of course this service will entail no monetary expense.

In order to make this request clear it should be explained that the news stand distribution of most periodicals is controlled wholly or in part by a great organization whose central offices are in New York City, with about one hundred branches in smaller cities, reaching into Canada and some foreign lands. The local magazine and news dealers receive their weekly or monthly supplies of periodicals from these branches of The American News Company, for the most part, as relatively few deal directly with the parent company—these latter being most of the dealers in New York City, and some who for many years have dealt with the American News Company direct.

The publisher of a magazine such as THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, situated outside of the New York City district—in this case Springfield, Massachusetts, as all know ——deals directly with the manager of the great central agency's local branch, which in the case of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY is the Springfield News Company, and by them the magazines are shipped directly to the other branches without going through the central concern, which is a clearing house only in certain managerial and purchasing aspects of its business.

It is only natural that the managers of any local News Company branch should lay the greatest stress on a constantly painstaking and efficient distribution and sales-promotion of magazines of a circulation that mounts into the millions—though some of these now maintain their own news stand distributing machinery, either wholly or partly independent of the news companies just described. Consequently, periodicals of relatively small circulation find it extremely difficult and costly to procure a satisfactory display on magazine counters. Deal-

ers who sell, say, three, five or seven copies of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY in thirty days cannot be expected to give much thought to its sale, or much space to its display, yet by the regular stocking of a reasonable variety of periodicals a dealer makes customers, and most customers buy more magazines than one. So, after all, the wise dealer whose business is a large one does realize that it pays to give some attention to the "small" magazine.

Without criticizing the several news companies, or implying carelessness on their part, it must be said that we are constantly receiving letters from readers complaining that they cannot find THE WRITER'S MONTHLY on sale in their neighborhood. This is partly due to the fact that it would be impossible for us to supply the news company with enough of our magazines to distribute one or more to every dealer in this country and Canada, because the returns would be so great as to swamp the boat, for not all newsdealers cater to a clientele that would normally read the MONTHLY. It is also due to the shortsightedness of some dealers who ought to sell a larger or smaller number of high-grade nonfiction magazines, is not attracting to their magazine counters purchasers of these worth-while periodicals.

Now here are two ways in which our friends can help us:

1. Ask your own newsdealer whether, if he does not carry THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, he will stock two copies monthly and display it for three months so as to let his customers know that it is published. If he sells these, he would, it is hoped, then increase his order conservatively.

2. If you do not wish to do this, send us promptly a postal card or a letter giving the exact name and address of *any* dealer *anywhere* who does not handle the MONTHLY —provided he carries a type of periodicals that obviously appeals to cultivated readers, as well as the more "popular" sort of magazines.

Your name will not be used by us in reporting to the branch news company that supplies the dealer or dealers. And of course this report will not be made in a complaining way, as the Springfield News Company has always welcomed cooperation on our part in circulation matters, but merely to increase the wise distribution of the MONTHLY. It would be obviously impolitic to supply dealers who would not probably be able to sell it; and it would entail a loss to us to have the News Company send out an excessive number of magazines, for of course that would only result in expensive returns.

We have frankly laid this whole problem before our friendly readers because we have received so many evidences of their interest in our continued growth and usefulness, and we trust that this request—and really it is made earnestly—may not seem to trespass upon good nature. Our reasoning is simple enough. The more cultivated people who see THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, the more will wish to read it regularly. The more who buy it or subscribe for it, the more money can we spend in making it still better. Thus our readers will be doubly repaid when they show it to their friends, and follow one or both of the foregoing definite suggestions regarding newsdealers—they will help themselves by enabling us to make a better magazine, and they will help us most appreciably. The time to do a good work is when it is freshly in mind.

H. C. S. Folks

Willa Morse Pinnell, Van Buren, Ark., is the author of "The Red Balloon", which ran in the August 29 issue of Our Young People (Nashville, Tenn.)

"The Evening Hymn" by Beatrice K. Buck, McKeesport, Pa., appeared in the July issue of American Needlewoman (Augusta, Maine).

Ann M. Holmes, Norfolk, Conn., is the author of a book recently published by the Mary Mildred Sullivan Chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy. It is entitled "The New York Ladies' Southern Relief Association, 1866-67". It is an account of the relief furnished by citizens of New York City to the inhabitants of the Devastated Regions of the South immediately after the Civil War. The work has won distinguished notice in various periodicals.

The December issue of True Experiences contained a story entitled "The Storm in the Heart" by Ada C. Escousse, New Orleans, La.

Martha Hardy Trimble, Shreveport, La., is the author of a poem, "Beside a Louisiana Road", published in the Christian Science Monitor (Boston) for last April; and "To an Unknown Lady" in the same periodical for September 1.

"The Danger Zone", a one-act play by Hortense A. Boynton, was presented last month at Fairfax Hall, Waynesboro, Va.

Anna Newell Appleton, Brighton, Mass., had a pleasant little story, "Sally's Advice", in the November 6 issue of Boston Daily Post.

Michael V. Simko, Bridgeport, Conn., is the author of "The White Birch Mystery", for juvenile readers, published by P. J. Kenedy & Sons.

Edna May Bush, New Florence, Pa., had a story entitled "Old Friends Are Best", in the September number of Sunbeam (Philadelphia); "Robert's Candy", in Wee Wisdom (Kansas City, Mo.); "The Hidden Box", "How Benny Found Rex", and "Charles Rides the Pony", in Dew Drops (Elgin, Ill.); "A Strange Picnic", in Junior Life (Cincinnati); and "Helen's Surprise", in Sunbeam. She also received a second prize in the Simile Contest conducted by American Humor last March; and a prize for a name suggested for America's Humor. Her prize-winning limerick, in the contest conducted by Smart Set, appeared in that magazine for November. Her humorous items appear in the various humorous magazines.

"Not Even a Sub", by Claire Boyle Bracken, Boise, Idaho, appeared in the Beacon (Boston) for October 10.

Ada Neill, Watertown, S. D., had two articles published recently, "The Charm of the Upper St. John River" in Southern Life Magazine (Biltmore, N. C.), and "The Personality of the Rheinstone Church of Germany" in The Grail (St. Meinrad, Ind.).

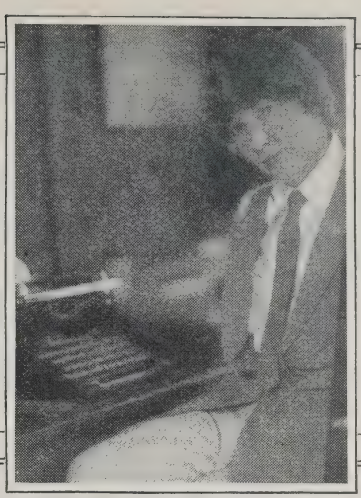
A number of poems by Harriet Gleason, Medina, Ohio, appeared in the Bookfellow Anthology for 1925.

Helen Kiefer, Takoma Park, Md., had an admirable story in the September

"WITH pleasure and profit I have read and studied the course of the Palmer Institute of Authorship. . . . You are making it possible for beginners in writing today to travel over a highway, instead of a rough and difficult road. Most important of all, you have helped to lay the silly old ghost 'inspiration,' and to prove that ours is a trade and a profession as surely as plumbing and preaching, and therefore calling for diligence and discipline, and such sound, sane, constructive training as you offer."

Ruth Comfort Mitchell

—whose seventh novel "Call of the House" is now running in "Woman's Home Companion."



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number of Today's Housewife, under the title of "Blindman".

Earl Chapin May, Chicago, Ill., is the author of an illustrated story that appeared in the June Shrine Magazine, entitled "Keeping the White Tops in Tune".

"The Unanswered Challenge", a striking story in the October 7 issue of Town Topics, was by Catherine U. Garber, Pelham Manor, N. Y.

Alden S. Young, Esq., Dallas, Texas, had an effective story in the November issue of Holland's Magazine (Dallas) entitled "The Man Without a Soul".

Stella C. Shetter, Clarksburg, W. Va., is the author of "When Grandma Was a Little Girl", brought out in August by Rand McNally & Company (Chicago). This book is a continuation of the "Early Candlelight Stories" brought out by the same company three years ago.

J. R. Johnston, New York, had a story in the Triple-X Magazine for December, entitled "When Good Brands Get Together", and another, "Feudal Blood", in North-West Stories for November 22.

Bert Leach, Portsmouth, Ohio, is the author of Pax Mundi—a Pageant of Universal Peace—which was first presented by the Portsmouth public schools, June 3 and 4. It was repeated for the State G. A. R. Encampment on June 18; repeated for the public on October 27; and given again at Southeastern Ohio Teachers' Association meeting on October 29. Mr. Leach is the author of a great many short-stories and poems.

Jean M. Michael, Toronto, Canada, is author of the following: "Three in a Tower" published with a front page illustration in Red Letter (England) for October 23; "Everything but Love" a reprint of "Beautiful Within" in the same magazine for October 9; "Miss Impulsive" in the October 26 issue of Home Circle (Louisville, Ky.); an editorial entitled "Jazz Language Drowns English" in the Open Range Page of the Denver Post for October 10; two crossword puzzles in the Toronto Evening Telegram during October.

"Mary the Meek" by Augusta Leinard, Chicago, was featured in the June issue of Gentlewoman.

The Boy's World (Elgin) had a story, "Big Money and Short Hours" by Walter E. Butts, Jr., Leroy, N. Y., in the November 6 issue.

What to Do (Elgin) had a story by Jean M. Thompson, West Reading, Pa., entitled "The Stolen Bear Cub", in the November 6 issue.

Roe Fulkerson, Washington, D. C., continues to provide an editorial feature for the Shrine Magazine, under the heading "Around the Caravan Camp Fire".

Clark Belden, Secretary of the Connecticut Chamber of Commerce, with its executive offices at Hartford, had a striking illustrated article in the October issue of the Elks Magazine, entitled "A New Responsibility for Motorists", dealing with what the States are doing to put a curb on habitual reckless drivers. Mr. Belden has also had two illustrated articles on the finances of Connecticut in recent issues of the Financial Digest entitled respectively, "Connecticut Entirely Out of Date", and "Connecticut Balances Her Budget". Both of these articles were written in collaboration with Governor John H. Trumbull, of Connecticut.

Dr. B. E. Washburn, Kingston, Jamaica, B. W. I., Director of the Bureau of Health Education for the Island, is the editor of "Jamaica Public Health".

Merta I. Merwin, Beaver City, Nebraska, had a feature article in the November 14 issue of the Nebraska State Journal, entitled "Travel Color in Nebraska".

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PRIZE CONTESTS

Yale University Press, New Haven Conn., publishes a Yale Series of Younger Poets, which is open to writers of Ammerican citizenship, who are under thirty years of age and have not previously published a volume of verse. Manuscripts for this competition are due May 1st and November 1st in each year. The best manuscript submitted in each competition is, if recommended by the Editor, published at the expense of the Yale University Press, the author receiving the usual 10% royalty on all copies sold in the United States. It is permissible to include poems previously published in periodicals or newspapers, if the consent of such journals is given for such republication. Contestants should address manuscripts and correspondence to the Editor, Yale Series of Younger Poets, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn.

The Independent Order Brith Sholom, Philadelphia, announces the following awards in the recent Samuel Morris Memorial Poetry Contest: First prize of $50 to Mr. A. B. Magill, New York, for his poem "Jew"; second prize of $30 to Mrs. Miriam H. Krarup, Larium, Michigan, for her poem "I'll Weave a Web of Laughter"; third prize of $20 to Miss Mollie Eisenstadt, Chicago, for "Yom Kippur"; first honorable mention to Miss Jean M. Batchelor, Narberth, Pa., for her poem "Mortality"; second honorable mention to Mr. A. B. Magill, New York, for "Fog"; third honorable mention to Mr. Louis I. Newman, San Francisco, Calif., for "The Scrolls of Parchment." The poems appeared in Brith Sholom News, the Order's monthly publication.

Life Cartoon Comedies, 598 Madison Ave., New York, will pay $50 for each scenario or idea they can use for their comedies, which are now being released throughout the United States and Canada by Educational Film Exchanges, Inc. Each of these comedies is five hundred feet (about half a reel) in length, and is crammed with as many humorous ideas, or "gags" as can possibly be included in that limited space. Moreover, each comedy has a definite plot, based on that firmest of all dramatic foundations, the Eternal Triangle. The three characters who form the corners of the triangle are Mike—the hero; Myrtle—the heroine; and High-Hat Harold—the villain. Ideas do not have to be in scenario form, nor is it even necessary to work out a complete story. They will pay full rates for one humorous idea—one "gag"—that they can use. Manuscripts should not exceed five hundred words in length. Manuscripts should be typewritten, or clearly written, using one side of the paper only. Each manuscript should be marked plainly with the sender's name and address, and should be accompanied by stamped self-addressed envelope.

The United Daughters of the Confederacy is offering the Mrs. Simon Baruch University Prize of $1000, to be awarded biennially, for the purpose of encouraging research in the history of the South, particularly in the Confederate period. The competition is limited to undergraduates and graduate students of universities and standard colleges in the United States and those who have been students in such institutions within

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the preceding three years. The prize will be awarded for an unpublished monograph or essay of high merit in the field of Southern history, preferably in or near the period of the Confederacy or bearing on the causes that led to the War Between the States. Any phase of life or policy may be treated. If no essay of high merit shall be submitted in any competition the prize will not be awarded for that year. Essays must be in scholarly form and must be based, partly at least, upon the use of source materials. Important statements should be accompanied with citations of the sources from which the data has been drawn and a bibliography should be appended. It is expected that essays will comprise not less than 10,000 words and it is preferred that they be of considerably greater length. In making the award, the committee will consider effectiveness of research, originality of thought, accuracy of statement and excellence of style. The prize will be paid in two installments of $500 each, the first at the time of the award, the second when the manuscript shall have been printed. This arrangement is intended to promote the printing of the essay in substantial permanent form at the author's initiative. If such printing shall not have been done within three years from the time of the award, the second installment will be forfeited. At least six copies of the printed essay shall be the property of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Essays in the first competition must be sent before September 1, 1927 to Mrs. Arthur H. Jennings, Chairman, 2200 Rivermont Ave., Lynchburg, Va. The first award will be in November, 1927, and the awards thereafter will be every second November.

System, Chicago, Ill., is awarding $550 in prizes for the best article on "What Simplification Has Done for Our Business." The contest is open to every one, especially writers and business men who have come in contact with business organizations using simplification. Consent of the organization about which the simplification article is written must, of course, be obtained before the article is entered in the competition. Although the first person form of presentation—"I", "we", "this company", as though written by a member of the business about which the article tells—has been found to be most effective in the writing of these articles, any form or style is acceptable. The contest closes at midnight, December 31, 1926. Manuscripts should be addressed to the Secretary, Simplification Awards, A. W. Shaw Company, Cass, Huron and Erie Sts., Chicago, Ill. Manuscripts which do not win prizes will be considered for publication at the usual rates.

The Tanager, Box 66, Grinnell, Iowa, offers a prize of $25 for the best poem submitted by its author before April 1, 1927. The poem may be of any type except a translation, but must not already have appeared in print.

Laird Extension Institute, Minneapolis, Minn., announces that May H. Guerin, Portland, Oregon, was the winner of the $100 prize for the best story submitted by a student. Dora Bower Eckles, York, Nebraska, and Sara A. Sandt, Madison, N. J., received honorable mention for stories submitted in the contest.

The Echo, 1837 Champa St., Denver, Colo., announces four important awards: The Joseph Reed Award of $500 for short-stories used in The Echo; The Annual Campion Memorial Award of $1000 for fostering the pioneer spirit of the West; the Mrs. Venner Z. Reed Fund of $500 for the development of Art and Literature through The Echo; The Frank E. Kistler Award of $220 for the best Echo covers. Hereafter, The Echo will pay on acceptance for each short-story it publishes and at the end of twelve months will award a first prize of $200 and a second prize of $100 for the stories judged, respectively, best and second best used during that period. The Echo will also pay on acceptance at fair rates for all available poems, essays, photo-

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American School Citizenship League, Boston, announces the following winners in its 1925-26 World Essay Contest: Normal School and Teachers' College Section—First prize to Dorothy Hibarger, Normal, Ill.; second prize to Annie McMillan, London, England; third prize to Lena Scranton, Normal, Ill. Secondary School Section — First prize to Beulah Millet, Mesa, Ariz.; second prize to F. C. Lewis, Bristol, England; third prize to Virginia Stanley, Lynchburg, Va.

The following prize contests, alphapetically arranged, are still running. Full particulars have been given in previous issues, but details are repeated here.

Adventure, Spring and Macdougal Sts., New York, offers an annual prize of $100 for the best poem published by them during the year.

The American Magazine, 250 Park Ave., New York offers a monthly prize contest for the best letters of not over 400 words on a given subject. Prizes are $30, $20 and $10. Subject changes each month. Contest closes the 20th of the month.

The American Rifleman, 1108 Woodward Bldg., Washington, D. C., offers a prize of $100 for the best hunting or shooting story received during the year, paying $10 for each story printed.

The Atlantic Monthly, Boston, offers $10,000 for the most interesting novel of any sort long enough to deserve book publication. It may be an adventure tale, or romance, or psychological novel. The award will be paid for serial and book rights alone, and royalties accruing from book publication will be additional. Photoplay and dramatic rights remain with the author. The book will be issued by Little Brown & Co., Boston, for the Atlantic Monthly Press. Whereas one book only may be selected for the prize, several novels beside the winning serial may be selected for book publication on the usual royalty basis. Translations will not be entered. All manuscripts must be unpublished work, typed double space on one side of the paper, submitted under one's own name or a pseudonym before February 15, 1927, to the Atlantic Monthly Company, 8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass.

The Caroline Sinkler Prize of $50 is offered by Miss Caroline Sinkler, of Philadelphia, Penn., for the best book of poems published by a Southern writer during the current year, and may be competed for by bona fide citizens of the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. Each book entered must be accompanied by a statement of resident citizenship of the author. One person only will receive the prize, which shall not be divided. Contest closes on February 28, 1927. Address all inquiries and books to Caroline Sinkler Prize Contest, c/o Poetry Society of South Carolina, 62 Broad St., Charleston, S. C.

The Chicago Trust Company offers annual prizes of $300 and $200 for the two best manuscripts on original research in business and finance. The competition is open to bank employees, and students of banking, commerce or law. In addition to these prizes, there is a triennial

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research prize of $2500 for an unpublished study, submitted in competition, which is considered to contain the greatest original contribution to knowledge and advancement in the field outlined. This award will be made in the autumn of 1927. Papers should be sent not later than June 1, 1927, and should be addressed to Professor Leverett S. Lyon, Professor of Economics, Robert Brookings Graduate School of Economics and Government, 1724 I Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

College Humor, Chicago, Ill., is offering a prize of $10,000 for the best novel, jointly with **First National Pictures** which see.

The Commonweal, New York, offers $1,000 and royalty for the best outline sketch of the history of Maryland. This competition is held through the generosity of Most Reverend Michael J. Curley, D. D., Archbishop of Baltimore, in the expectation that young people will delve into the early record of Maryland, especially as the history of the colony shows forth the principles of tolerance. The sketch, to contain not less than 15,000 nor more than 25,000 words, should be of distinctive literary merit, and deal with Maryland from 1630 to 1790. All manuscripts must be typed, accompanied by a stamped return envelope, and sent to Baltimore Prize Committee, The Commonweal, Grand Central Terminal, New York, N. Y., before February 1, 1927.

The Crowell Publishing Company, as publishers of The Woman's Home Companion, and **The John Day Company, Inc.,** will award $50,000 in prizes for the two most interesting, well-written novels best adapted to serial and book publication. The Crowell Publishing Company will pay $20,000 for the winning novel written by a man, and a like sum for the winning novel written by a woman, for the first American serial rights. The John Day Company will pay $5000 for the United States and Canadian book rights of the winning novel written by a man, and a like sum for the winning novel written by a woman as advance payment on account of royalties. A competitor may submit more than one manuscript, but each must be entered separately. All manuscripts submitted must be original unpublished works written in English. Translations will not be eligible. No manuscript containing less than 50,000 words should be submitted; preference will be given to manuscripts of full novel length. All manuscripts must be addressed to "Novel Competition," c/o The John Day Company, 25 West 45th St., New York City. A printed agreement, which will be sent on request, must be mailed in a sealed envelope marked "Novel Competition" at the same time the manuscript is submitted, together with sufficient postage for return of manuscript. Competition closes July 1, 1927.

Curtis Brown, Ltd., 116 West 39th St., New York, in conjunction with Frederick A. Stokes Company and The Forum, offers a net award of $7000 and royalties for the best American biographical novel. The author retains stage, film and translation rights. The competition is open to all authors regardless of residence or nationality. Manuscripts must reach Curtis Brown, Ltd., not later than March 1, 1927. All manuscripts must be original with the contestant and in the English language. No translation will be accepted. No manuscript may bear the actual name of the author but must bear a pseudonym under the title. Manuscripts should be of not less than 80,000 words, and not more than 110,000 words. A competitor may send in as many manuscripts as he chooses but each must be entered separately according to directions. In the event that the judges should determine that any novels are tied for such first prize, the entire amount of such first prize will be awarded to each tying contestant. Procure an entry form from Curtis Brown, Inc., to go with every manuscript submitted.

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First National Pictures and College Humor, Chicago, Ill., offer a joint prize of $10,000 for the story or novel best adapted for magazine and motion picture production. Any writer, whether amateur or professional, is eligible. In case the judges decide that two or more entries are of equal value, the award of $10,000 will be paid to each tying contestant. Any writer may submit as many stories as he sees fit, but they must be original. No translations or collaborations will be considered. Novels or stories must be approximately 100,000 words in order to meet the needs of serialization in College Humor. The contest is not, however, limited to novels — stories from 5000 to 110,000 words will be considered. All manuscripts must be signed with a pen name, the author's real name and address being placed in an attached sealed envelope bearing the pen name given on the manuscript. All manuscripts must be sent charges prepaid and accompanied by postage for their return, addressed College Humor, Chicago, Ill. Contest closes midnight, February 28, 1927.

The Forum, New York, is offering in conjunction with F. A. Stokes Co., a net prize of $7000 and royalties for the best biographical novel, through Curtis Brown, Inc., which see.

Harper & Brothers, 49 East 33rd St., New York, is offering $2000 in addition to the ordinary royalty for the best novel as determined by the judges. Any author is eligible for the prize who is an American citizen and who has not published a novel in book form prior to January 1, 1919. Only manuscripts of unpublished works, accompanied by the declaration of the author that the manuscript is submitted in competition for the prize, shall be considered. All manuscripts submitted in competition must be offered to Harper & Brothers for publication on terms to be arranged between the author and publisher. The successful work shall be chosen from among those manuscripts accepted by Harper & Brothers for publication and the prize shall be in addition to and independent of the royalty to be arranged for in the usual way. Harper's Magazine shall have the right to publish the successful work serially on terms to be arranged with the author but this right may be waived. No manuscript containing less than 30,000 words shall be considered as a novel for the purpose of this competition and preference will be given in general to works of full novel length. Competition closes February 1, 1927.

Hart, Schaffner & Marx, Chicago, offer annually prizes amounting to $2000 for the best studies in the economic field. The prizes are divided as follows: Class A—first prize, $1000; second prize, $500. Class B—first prize, $300; second prize, $200. Class A includes any resident of the United States or Canada, without restriction. Class B includes only those who, at the time papers are sent in, are undergraduates of any American college. Subjects for studies are suggested, but any other subjects may be chosen, if approved by the Committee. Competitors are advised that the studies should be thorough, expressed in good English, and, although not limited as to length, not needlessly expanded. Manuscripts should be inscribed with an assumed name, the class in which they are presented, and accompanied by a sealed envelope giving the real name and address of the competitor, together with any degrees or distinctions already obtained. If competitor is in Class B, the sealed envelope should contain the name of the institution in which he is studying. Contributions should be sent to J. Laurence Laughlin, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill., on or before June 1, 1927. Further particulars and a list of subjects already approved by the Committee may be obtained from Mr. Laughlin.

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Little Brown and Company, Boston, offers a prize of $2000 in addition to royalty for a book for boys and girls ten years old or more. Only manuscripts of unpublished works not less than 40,000 words in length, submitted before March 1, 1927, and accompanied by a statement that the manuscript is submitted in competition for the prize, shall be considered. Address all contributions to "Prize Competition," Little, Brown and Company, Publishers, 34 Beacon St.. Boston, Mass.

The National Republic offers prizes aggregating more than $1000 for the best essays on the subject, "The American Constitution." $500 will be awarded to the student enrolled in any high school of the United States or its possessions who writes the best essay submitted by a high school student. $500 will be awarded to the student enrolled in any graded school (up to and including the eighth grade) of the United States or possessions who writes the best essay submitted by a graded school student. An engraved honor medal will be awarded to the students of each of the two described classes in each state who submit the best essay written in each of their classes in each state; and an American flag, as a trophy of victory, will be awarded to each school in each state represented by a winning contestant. $50 will be awarded to the high school teacher nominated by the winner of the national high school prize; and the same amount to the graded school teacher nominated by the winning graded school contestant. In case of any tie identical prizes will be awarded. To be eligible to an award, notice of an intention to compete must be filed with the National Republic before January 15, 1927, and all essays must be put into the mails on or before February 28, 1927. Essays must not be over 1500 words in length. Name, address, name of school, name of teacher nominated for the $50 award, and in case of graded schools, age of contestant must be filed by each entrant, both in entering the contestant and in submitting an essay. Help from other persons in the actual composition of these essays is forbidden. Address notice of intention to enter the contest to the National Republic, National Essay Department, 425 Tenth St., N. W., Washington, D. C.

Overland Monthly, San Francisco, Calif., announces the Frona Wait Colburn prizes offered by the San Francisco Branch of League of American Pen Women, for the three best stories depicting the cultural life north of Tehachapi from 1870 to 1890. Prizes are $50, $30, and $20. There is no limit on treatment, which may be adventure, mystery, romance, psychoanalysis, in the form of comedy or tragedy. The contest is limited to bona fide residents of California. New writers are especially solicited. Stories may be from 5000 to 7000 words, but should preferably be 6000. Manuscripts must be anonymous, with the name and address of the writer in a separate, sealed envelope bearing the title of the story. Contest closes February 1, 1927, but no awards will be made unless thirty-five manuscripts are submitted. Manuscripts should be sent to Overland Monthly, Prize Contest Editor, 356 Pacific Bldg., San Francisco, Calif.

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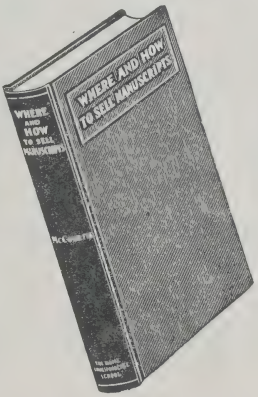

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The Pasadena Center of the Drama League of America offers a prize of $300 for the best full-evening play, and $100 for the best short play. Full evening plays must cover at least two hours for reading time. State the playing time on each manuscript. One-act plays must not exceed forty-five minutes for reading time. All subject matter must be original—although two or more authors may collaborate. There is no limit to the number of plays that each author may submit.

Each manuscript shall bear the inscription: "Submitted in the 1926-27 Play Contest of the Pasadena Center of the Drama League of America." All manuscripts must be in the hands of Miss Louise West, 735 El Campo Drive, Box 592, R. 3, Pasadena, Calif., on or before March 1, 1927.

The Penn Publishing Company, 925 Filbert St., Philadelphia, will award seven prizes in cash for play manuscripts. First prize, $1000; second prize, $500; third prize, $250; fourth prize, $100; and three prizes of $50 each. The plays must be at least three acts, and may be comedies, melo-dramas, or serious plays. The costuming and settings should be simple; the plots clearly defined; the plays free from objectionable features. Contest closes March 1, 1927. In the event of a tie for any of the prizes, a prize of the amount offered will be awarded to each of the tying contestants. Detailed information sent upon request.

Scribner's Magazine is conducting for the General Federation of Women's Clubs an educational contest in which prizes aggregating $1000 will be awarded to any club or any woman belonging to a federated club for the best lists in American literature, American music, and American art. Contestants should prepare the lists as for a home. In the literature contest, prizes of $300 and $100 will be awarded for the two best lists of two hundred books, written by American authors and published in America. The lists should include some discussion of present-day problems. A third prize of the Cornhill Edition of the works of William Makepeace Thackeray will be given. Additional awards of $50 will be made to the two leaders of the honorable-mention list. For the best list of one hundred records for the home, the music of which is composed by Americans, a first prize of $150 will be awarded, and a second prize of $50. A third prize of the Thistle Edition of the work of J. M. Barrie will be given. Additional awards of $25 will be made to the two leaders of this honorable-mention list. In the art contest, prizes of $150 and $50 will be awarded for the best essay, not exceeding 4000 words, upon the subject, "America's Distinctive Contribution to Painting and Sculpture". A third prize of the works of Robert Louis Stevenson is also offered. Additional awards of $25 will be made to the two leaders in the honorable-mention list. Lists should be double-spaced, written on one side of paper only, and submitted in three divisions, if all contests are entered, with name and address at the top of each paper. Entries should be sent to the Editor of the Club Corner, Scribner's Magazine, 597 Fifth Ave., New York. Contest closes February 1, 1927.

The Southern Prize of $100 is offered annually by Mrs. Craig Barrow, of Savannah, Ga., to encourage the writing of poetry in the South, and may be competed for by bona fide citizens of the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. No manuscripts must be over 100 lines in length. Only one poem by an author may be entered, and this poem must be entered for the Southern Prize only. Poems must be previously unpublished, and not copyrighted. Poems must be submitted anonymously. All poems must be in the hands of the Secretary of the Poetry Society of South Carolina by February 28, 1927. Manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, return addressed envelope. One

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person only will receive the prize, which shall not be divided. The winning poem becomes the property of the Poetry Society of South Carolina to be published in such form (or not) as the Society deems proper. Address all inquiries and manuscripts to: The Poetry Society of South Carolina, 62 Broad St., Charleston, S. C.

MISCELLANEOUS

Save the Surface Magazine, 18 East 41st St., New York. Reports: "We are in the market for interior and exterior photographs of dwellings made before and after painting the room or the house. Snapshot pictures or pictures made with a small camera will be satisfactory if they show sharp, clear detail. The after painting pictures should be made from the same location as was used in making the before painting pictures. Pictures should be accompanied by brief descriptions of the work done giving the old and the new color schemes. For material of this kind which is suitable for publication in this magazine, we will pay up to $3.00 for photographs and up to 3c a word for text. Unless the story describes a very unusual paint job we will hardly want more than 500 words in any one story. We are also interested in any unusual uses of paint and varnish or in any unusual effects produced with paint and varnish. We would suggest that a writer query us before preparing an article."

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Western Flying, 701 Bryson Bldg., Los Angeles, Calif, Monthly, 25c; $1.50. Editor, Robert J. Pritchard. Reports: "We are very anxious to obtain short fiction of not more than 3000 words, preferably 2000 words, dealing with aviation. What we are particularly interested in is stories dealing with the adventures of the barnstorming flyer—that is, the gypsy aviator who flies from town to town, picking up his ham and eggs as he goes. There really is a mine of romance and adventure in this theme which has not been touched by the writers of fiction. The stories should be written in the first person—that is to say, they should be the narrative of the barnstormer himself. For this reason they should include the slang of the air and the minor technical expressions which are common to aviators. Our rates for this material are not high, but we pay promptly upon acceptance, and if we can get what we are looking for, someone will find a steady market for his wares."

Contemporary Verse, Box 427, Norwalk, Conn. Monthly, 35c; $1.50. Editors, Lucia Trent, Ralph Cheyney. Reports: "We have discontinued all prize offers and do not pay for contributions. We are always glad to give careful consideration to free contributions."

Southwest Merchant and Economist and Drygoodsman, 1627 Locust St., St. Louis, Mo. Reports: "Instead of waiting until next summer or fall to buy our Christmas article needs, we will buy them during this December and January, offering writers an immediate market for the material they collect during the holidays. We prefer that this material be accompanied by photographs and advertisements to illustrate it, although this is not necessary in each case. All kinds of merchandising, salesmanship, advertising, etc., plans will be ac-

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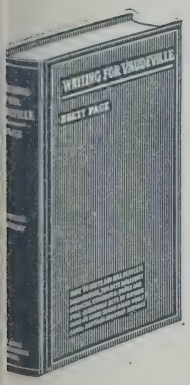

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True Heart Tales, Suite 502, 45 West 45th St., New York. Monthly, 20c; $2.00. Editor, Aaron Wyn. First issue, January, 1927. Reports: "We use only first-person stories in which the narrator is the chief character and prefer those written from the young woman's point of view. The stories we want must be simply and clearly written, have a strong love interest, and plenty of well-motivated dramatic action. They also must have a moral tone, but not too much preaching. And last, but most important, they must be plausible. In all instances the localities in which the events take place must be specified. We prefer stories of about 3000 words, excepting two-part stories, which may run up to 7000 words. Material is reported on within two weeks, and payment is made on acceptance, at the rate of 1c to 2c a word."

Tales of Temptation, 586 Drexel Bldg., 5th & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, Penn. Monthly. Associate Editor, C. M. Stuart. Reports: "We desire terse, crisp, well-written stories of the temptations of women, preferably with a highly emotional love element therein, stressing that 'the right way is the best way'. The magazine will be a combination of 'confession' type and love story type of tale, but we do not want stories in the first person unless they are of exceptional merit. In view of the fact that the greatest number of temptations probably exist where the greatest number of people are congregated, the locale of the stories should avoid what is known as 'country'. Night life, city streets, jazz palaces, etc., afford far better opportunity to meet our requirements. Also 'studio' and stage life, and department stores. Sentimental verse up to 16 lines will be used. Fiction may range from 2500 to 5000 words and occasionally a novelette of 15,000 to 20,000 words will be used. Payment will be made at the rate of ½c per word and up, on a scheduled date each month, irrespective of date of publication of material."

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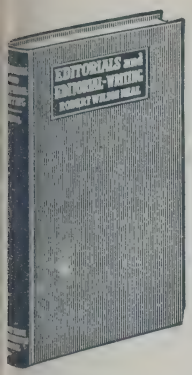

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Jessie A. Leason, 998 Dayton Ave., St. Paul, Minn., reports: "I will purchase high-class exclusive news photographs. Photographs of pretty girls in news events especially desired."

The Pet Shop, 711 Sixth Ave., New York. Monthly, 25c; $3.00. Editor, B. F. Lippold. Reports: "We use matter pertaining to the conduct and management of stores selling pets of all kinds, short pithy matter devoid of flourishes. Also use stories of animals, birds, or other pets. Photographs used. Material reported on in two weeks, and payment made after publication at the rate of ½c a word."

The New South Magazine, Provident Building, Chattanooga, Tenn. Monthly. Editor, Paul Severance. Reports: "The New South Magazine is the successor to Dixieland, which ceased publication a few months ago. The first issue will be published January, 1927. We are in the market for three-part serials, short fiction not to exceed 5000 words, articles which analyze and review the successful lives of outstanding southern men and women, and articles on southern opportunities and development. We are also in the market for art covers in two or even three colors and are especially anxious to secure photographs of southern scenes of unusual beauty or which show marked development or have news value. The goal of the magazine is to appeal to popular interest; to keep free from boastfulness and exaggeration; to stimulate independent thought in the south and foster art in its various phases. The vision is forward. We do not want tales of the old South, civil war stories, negro stories, unless very modern, nor historical sketches of outstanding figures of the past. The tone is inspirational, designing to show in the most convincing way the values and opportunities that the South has to offer."

Northwest Stories, 461 Eighth Ave., New York. Semi-monthly; 20c; $5.00. Editor, Jack Kelly. Reports: "Want Northern and Western stories of action, with an outdoor tang, plus woman or sentimental interest. Short-stories should be from 3000 to 6000 words; novelettes of 25,000 words; and serials from 45,000 to 55,000 words. Also use Northern and Western verse of eight to twenty-four lines. Occasionally use an outdoor animal yarn with an element of human interest. Report on manuscripts within five days."

The Woman's Viewpoint, 342 Madison Ave., New York. Monthly; 25c; $3.00. Editor, Florence M. Sterling. Reports: "We can use short stories of 2500 to 3000 words; novelettes of 7500 words; and short verse. Payment is on publication at the rate of one cent a word."

The Keystone, P. O. Box 1424, Philadelphia, Pa. Reports: "This is a monthly publication of the jewelry industry, and is interested primarily in articles of a helpful nature to retail jewelers. At the present time, we are considering short fiction written along business lines—particularly the jewelry business—and in a lighter vein. We are also glad to consider feature articles for the credit and gift and art departments. Payment is made upon publication at rates ranging from 30c an inch to 2c a word."

American Education, 675 Boylston St., Boston. Nine times a year; 25c; $2.00. Editor, Prof. Herbert Blair. Reports: "We want educational articles from 1000 to 2000 words, not theoretical dealing with research and the technique of teaching. Personal opinion on educational subjects unsupported by experi-

Novels Criticized

For the Prize Contests

MANY important contests are now running, with prizes from $2,000 to $25,000. See notices in the Where To Sell section of this number.

In addition, the publishers' readers in these contests are instructed to select other worthy manuscripts for possible publication. Never were chances better for the close reading and consideration of manuscripts written by authors who have not previously published a novel.

Before sending in **YOUR** prize novel, get the advice and help of competent editorial critics. It may make all the difference between success and failure, and the cost is small compared with the effort and time required to write a novel.

Fee: 50,000 words or over, 60c per thousand words in advance. Send postage for return.

Typing of novel manuscripts, 75c per thousand, including paper and one carbon copy.

Manuscript Service

The Home Correspondence School

Springfield, Massachusetts

mental evidence cannot be used. Our present special needs are for 500 to 1000 word descriptions of successful teaching devices. No photographs are used. Material reported on within sixty days. In common with most other educational magazines, no payment is made except in extra copies of the magazine."

Bradford Card Company, Newton, Mass. Reports: "We are just getting up a line of photographic Christmas cards and greeting cards of all kinds. We will want sentiments of all types. They should not run over six lines at the most, and four lines should be the average length. For the present we can use sentiments of any kind with a view to getting pictures to fit the sentiments."

TRADE JOURNALS

Motordom, 110 State Street, Albany, N. Y. Monthly; 15c; $1.50. Editor, John C. Crary. News about legislation, road conditions, etc., for motorists of New York State.

Motor-Ship, 27 Pearl St., New York. Monthly; 25c; $3.00. Editor, T. Orchard Lisle. Technical articles dealing with oil-engines, and motor ship operation and construction, both commercial and naval types.

Motor Travel, 12 E. 53d St., New York. Monthly; 25c; $3.00. Editor, John T. Rosengren. Articles of interest to the motorist who tours; also photographs. Manuscripts are reported on in two weeks, and payment on publication.

Motor Truck, Times Bldg., Pawtucket, R. I. Monthly; 20c; $2.00. Reports: "We are interested in articles dealing with the work accomplished through the use of commercial vehicles. Articles should include data dealing with tonnage or volume of merchandise delivery, working conditions, accounting methods employed, and such other facts entering into costs and earnings as can be obtained. We are also interested in articles dealing with service stations, how they are operated, accounting systems employed and such other facts as would interest the automotive trade interests."

Motor Vehicle Monthly, 1010 Arch St., Philadelphia, Penn. Monthly; 25c; $2.00. Editor, A. P. Cardwell. Uses technical articles of design, construction, painting and equipping of automobile and motor truck bodies and tops. Covers entire field including body departments of automobile and motor truck plants, body manufacturers, top, trim, paint and repair shops. Writers must necessarily be well informed as to current development in motor car factories. Payment on publication.

Motor West, Marsh-Strong Bldg., 9th and Main Sts., Los Angeles, Calif. Twice a month; $3.00. Editor, George M. Schell.

Motor World Wholesale, published by Chilton Class Journal Co., Chestnut and 56th Sts., Phila., Penna. Weekly; $2.00 per year. It is a weekly news and business paper devoted entirely to interests of wholesalers of cars, replacement parts, accessories, tires, batteries, electrical supplies, shop equipment, radio, etc., and for their executives, travelers and salesmen.

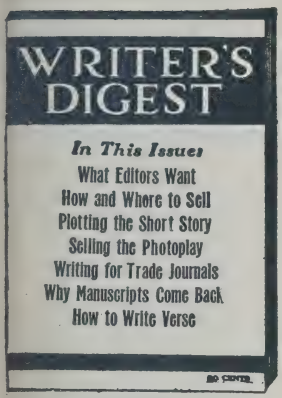
National Taxicab and Motorbus Journal, 461 Eighth Ave., New York. Monthly; 20c; $2.00. Editor, G. M. Sangster. Reports: "We are in market for illustrated feature stories, descriptive of taxicab and motorbus companies, operating methods and policies, business building policies, shop methods and practices, accounting methods, operating data, new equipment, etc. Photographs will also be considered. Payment made on publication at rate of 25c per inch."

Ohio Motorist, Hollenden Hotel, Cleveland, Ohio. Monthly; 5c; 50c. Editor, Herbert Buckman.

Operation and Maintenance, Chestnut & 56th St., Phila., Penna. Monthly; 20c; $2.00. Editor, David Beecroft. Caters exclusively to owners of fleets of motor trucks and motor buses in all lines of

"Enclosed Is Our Check for $100.00"

—that sounds better than a rejection slip, does it not? And that's exactly what many students of the WRITER'S DIGEST are receiving—checks instead of rejection slips.

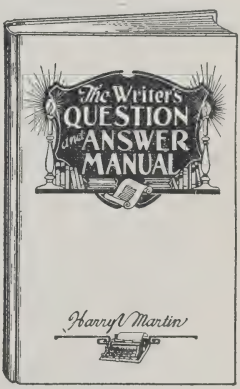


THE WRITER'S DIGEST is a monthly magazine that teaches how to write short stories, verse, song poems, photoplays, articles for trade journals, syndicated stories for newspapers—every form of literary composition.

The articles that fill this magazine every month are written by men and women who have arrived at the goal of success, and are telling you *how* it is done. Their inspiring messages, the helpful "how to" articles covering every phase of writing for profit, how and where to sell every kind of manuscript—all make the WRITER'S DIGEST indispensable to every writer, whether he or she is now on the high-road to success, or only an ambitious novice.

Here are the titles of just a few of the helpful articles appearing in the WRITER'S DIGEST. Read them and see if you can afford to miss this wonderful harvest. It is yours to reap, and at a nominal cost within the reach of anyone:

What Editors Want
How to Find Plots
The Business Side of Writing
Why Manuscripts Come Back
How to Get Story Ideas
Importance of the Title
Revising a Rejected Story
Writing for Trade Journals
Technique of Verse Writing
Practical Tools for the Writer
How and Where to Sell
What Writers Should Know and Do
Selling the Photoplay
Living Your Characters



THE WRITER'S QUESTION & ANSWER MANUAL

Sent, Postpaid, Absolutely FREE

This helpful book, written by Harry V. Martin, comprises five hundred and forty-two questions that commonly confront all writers—covering every phase of authorship—and are answered clearly and concisely.

The answers are given out of the author's practical experience during the years in which he has made his living with a typewriter.

The questions answered are just the kind that you and I have asked many times. Many of them cannot be found in the scores of text-books on the subject of authorship. They are grouped conveniently under the various chapter heads of fiction, special article writing, photoplays, newswriting, song and verse writing, advertising and publicity, with the last chapter embodying the answers to practically every question that confronts the writer on proper preparation and selling of the manuscript. It is a book that should be on the desk of every writer and will be sent, postpaid, ABSOLUTELY FREE, if the coupon is filled in and sent to us promptly. This book is handsomely bound in cloth, 141 pages, and is of untold help to every writer. SEND COUPON TODAY.

WRITER'S DIGEST,

Department 856

22 E. 12th Street, Cincinnati, O.

FREE!

USE THIS COUPON TODAY

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(Dept. 856) 22 East 12th St., Cincinnati, O.

I enclose $2 (P.O. Order, Check or Currency) to cover one year's subscription for the WRITER'S DIGEST, beginning with current number, and for which you are to send me also, by return mail, postpaid, the book WRITER'S QUESTION & ANSWER MANUAL, absolutely free. If not satisfied, you are to refund my $2 upon request.

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(Street, P.O. Box, or R.F.D.)

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(City and State)

business operation and maintenance. Uses articles dealing with motor truck operation, and topical articles affecting either motor truck or bus operation or maintenance. All articles must be written from the viewpoint of fleet owner and not the motor truck manufacturer or the motor truck dealer, agent or distributor. All articles must contain authentic facts and figures rather than generalities. Articles should tell fleet owner how to operate his trucks more economically and prove each instance given by citing from some actual fleet owners who have solved the problems discussed. Manuscripts reported on within a week. Payment on 15th of month following publication of article.

Power Farming Dealer, 5705 Woodward Av., Detroit, Mich. Monthly; 10c; $1.00. Editor, Raymond Olney. Reports: "We desire especially personal interviews with dealers, or articles based on personal interviews. Such material must be very specific dealing with those things which will be of practical assistance to other dealers. We are interested only in power-farming equipment, such as tractors, motor trucks, cultivators, farm lighting plants, and all kinds of farm motor implements and machines operated by mechanical power. Can use stories giving complete account of dealer's merchandising and articles dealing with specific plans of giving service, advertising, and other merchandising features of business. Contributors, in submitting material of this nature, should also include blank form used by the dealer and the dealer's letter-head. We prefer to have articles well illustrated with portrait photographs of the dealer himself, views of interior and exterior of dealer's place of business; also, pictures of other dealer's activities. Manuscripts usually reported on the day or day following on which they are received. Payment is made on acceptance.

Power Wagon, 536 Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Ill. Monthly; 50c; $5.00. Editor, Austin W. Stromberg. Reports: "We desire descriptions of selling or manufacturing methods as employed by leading motor truck dealers and manufacturers; records of the operation and economy of motor trucks of guaranteed accuracy and properly authorized by the owners; news of all kinds regarding progress and development of motor truck and allied industries and of the individual concerns of which they are composed. There is no limit to length; the test is quality of material, its interest, permanent value and style. None of the light, superficial type of journalism as common in news and trade papers will be considered. The standards are very high and are strictly observed. Photographs are used only when necessary to illustrate the articles. Those submitted should be of a quality on a par with the manuscript, and will be judged solely by the standards of interest, value and suitability. Manuscripts are reported on within the month following receipt. Payment made shortly after publication."

DISCONTINUED

International Book Review, 354 Fourth Ave., New York.

Fighting Romances, 1926 Broadway, New York.

Wild Game Stories, 22 East 12th St., Cincinnati, Ohio.

All Boys Magazine, 429 Knickerbocker Theatre Bldg., New York.

Wheeler-Nicholson, Inc., 373 Fourth Ave., New York. Mail returned unclaimed.

Home Equipment, Des Moines, Ia. Merged with House Furnishing Review.

Farmer's Dispatch, St. Paul, Minn.

Kansas City Star Magazine, Kansas City, Mo.

The Detective Magazine, Fleetway House, Farringdon St., London, E. C. 4, England.

The Spice Box, Rockland, Mass.

Merry-Go-Round, 630 Tribune Bldg., New York.

Editorial Criticism

Do you want to know what the editor of a big magazine would say about your story—if he had time to consider your manuscript separately and fully?

What would it be worth to you to know in advance whether your story was likely to meet editorial approval? And if not, wherein its essential failure lay?

As a writer, working alone, you necessarily experience difficulty in getting sufficiently outside your work to judge it editorially, nor have you the training to judge it as an editor would.

You want to know—

The major faults of the manuscript.

Whether the theme is an appealing one.

Whether the characters are real.

Whether the incidents are plausible.

How to get the most out of the plot.

About slips that would seriously mar the story.

Where to send the story.

These and many more questions it would profit you to have an answer to, given out of the sure knowledge and ripe experience of an editor.

We cannot undertake "to revise and make absolutely salable;" but we can tell you what revision is needed, and how to go about it. We will tell you what you ought to know for your own and for the manuscript's good.

Moreover, although we maintain no "placing" service, our thorough knowledge of editorial preferences, constantly augmented through sources of information not open to everybody, enables us to suggest a considerable variety of possible markets in most cases, and with such accurate prejudgment that criticised manuscripts are often sold.

Fees

For the criticism of each separate short-story, article, novelette or novel.

1000 words or less	$1.00
Between 1000 and 1500 words	1.50
" 1500 and 2000 "	2.00
" 2000 and 2500 "	2.50
" 2500 and 3000 "	3.00
" 3000 and 3500 "	3.25
" 3500 and 4000 "	3.50
" 4000 and 4500 "	3.75
" 4500 and 5000 "	4.00
" 5000 and 5500 "	4.40
" 5500 and 6000 "	4.80
" 6000 and 6500 "	5.20
" 6500 and 7000 "	5.60
" 7000 and 7500 "	6.00
" 7500 and 8000 "	6.40
" 8000 and 8500 "	6.80
" 8500 and 9000 "	7.20
" 9000 and 9500 "	7.60
" 9500 and 10000 "	8.00

Over 20,000 words, 35c for each 500 words or fraction thereof up to 40,000 words. Over 40,000 words, 30c for each 500 words or fraction thereof.

The minimum fee is $1.00. Each manuscript is charged for separately and not in groups.

Photoplay Criticism, $2.00 for a synopsis or scenario of not more than 1000 words; 75c for each additional 500 words.

Verse Criticism, $1.00 for each poem of twenty lines or less—the minimum price.

Song Criticism, $1.50 for each song-poem. Music is not criticised.

Play Criticism, $10.00 for a one-act drama, or for the first act of a longer play; $5.00 for each additional act.

These fees do not include postage for return, which should always be enclosed.

Manuscript Service Department

The Home Correspondence School
Springfield, Mass.

Embryo Scholars — The University Correspondent — a monthly educational journal devoted mainly to university matters—gives in its holiday number a selection of the amusing schoolboy mistakes which it received in a prize competition. Among the "howlers" are the following:

A relative pronoun is a family pronoun, such as mother, brother, aunt.

Degrees of comparison of bad—Bad, very sick, dead.

The masculine of dam is dash.

The climate of the island is wet but embracing.

"The Compleat Angler" is another name for Euclid, because he wrote all about angles.

Things which are halves of themselves are equal to each other.

Water may be made hard by freezing, and the hardness removed by boiling it.

A mosquito is the child of black and white parents.

Rhubarb is a celery gone bloodshot.

The first book in the Bible is Guinessis.

Genius is an infinite capacity for picking brains.

Charles II. told the people they could get drunk or gamble or do what they liked. This was called the Restoration. —Montreal Star.

A Matter of Years—The novelist's small boy had just been brought to judgment for telling a lie. His sobs having died away, he sat for a time in silent thought.

"Pa," said he, "how long will it be before I stop gettin' licked for tellin' lies, an' begin to get paid for 'em like you do?"—Exchange.

Presence of Mind.—Papa was deep in a book, when his wife called, "Dan, baby has swallowed the ink. Whatever shall I do?'

"Write with a pencil," was the reply. —Patton's Monthly.

Yes-No?—"What is an erotic poem?"

"One with the accent on the rot, I suppose."—B. A. W.

The Cynical Copy Reader—(Heading in Franklin Ind. Star) College Romance Is Ended by Engagement.—American Legion Weekly.

$UCCE$$ — Umph (reading): This lexicographer says that the ordinary man can make sixteen words by adding suffixes to "accept": "acceptilate," "acceptilation," and so on.

Hump: Well, the only suffix that I want is "*ed.*"—Ray W. Frohman.

Something New

"Write something new," the author is told;
It is old advice, 'though true:
If he were but told to write something old,
That would be something new.
—Vinton A. Holbrook.

A JOURNAL FOR ALL WHO WRITE

The Writer's Monthly

FEBRUARY, 1927

$1000 A WORD

ON WRITING HUMOR

THE SPORT STORY

DEPARTMENTAL WRITING

PRIZE CONTESTS

MARKET NEWS

25c *the copy*

$3.00 *the year*

The Home Correspondence School
Springfield, Mass.

The Writer's Monthly

A Journal for All Who Write

Volume XXIX FEBRUARY, 1927 Number 2

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CANADA, $3.25; FOREIGN, $3.50

FEBRUARY, 1927 Volume XXIX, No. 2

The Writer's Monthly

Consider the Trade Paper

G. K. Dahl

The Associate Editor of House Furnishing Review Knows Whereof He Writes in this Brief Informative Article

OF ALL the many and varied publications which receive unsolicited contributions, the trade magazines are given least notice by competent writers; and their requirements, judging from the average contribution, are most frequently misunderstood. The editors of this type of magazine would be unanimous in their approval of this statement; their highest percentage of accepted material has been less than half the articles received. Further, almost all of those chosen for publication must be revised, condensed and even rewritten before they can be used. Yet, despite the neglect of authors, the trade press offers real opportunities for profit.

My own experience as an editor of a trade magazine, from the standpoint of contributions, has been most discouraging. During the entire month of last September, notwithstanding the approach of the holiday season, only three articles were submitted to me, and none of these merited acceptance. Yet, we are in crying need of free-lance material: our magazine circulates among department store buyers in every state — how are we, in New York, to know what new "stunts" are being originated in Kalamazoo and Santa Fé? True, we have correspondents who tour the nation, but they are not omnipresent. We must prepare a schedule of editorial material for the entire coming year—what if the editors, the staff writers, the old stand-bys, grow stale? On whom can we depend?

The problem is easy to "answer", hard to bring to a practical solution. Free-lance writers all over the nation can help us out: if they learn to submit suitable material, we shall come to depend

largely upon them. The day of the one-man trade paper has passed: that of the staff-composed specialty magazine will follow the other to oblivion—as soon as writers awake to the possibilities inherent for them in the business and industrial press.

What do the editors of these magazines seek? Get a few copies and look them over. You can't buy them on a newsstand, but you can go to the proprietors of your neighborhood stores and ask permission to read a few back numbers. What stores? All of them; for every sort of merchandising, every branch of manufacturing, is served by a specialty magazine. I know not how many of these are published, but I can say with authority that their number exceeds that of the fiction and popular periodicals many times. The dry goods merchant will have several, so will the electrical dealer and the grocer; the hardware man receives both weeklies and monthlies. There is one or more for every section of the department store.

When you have procured a copy, read it carefully. Skip the "sales manager" and credit articles—these are always written by the staff or solicited from an authority—and give your whole attention to those articles which tell the buyer or proprietor what other stores are doing. What these men want to know is this: "How do Smith & Co. get better turn-over on canning supplies?" "What kind of advertising sells vacuum cleaners?" "What new trick can I find to help push my electric heaters?"

Can you answer those or similar questions? Not from your own experience, perhaps, but you can walk into your local store and see how Mr. Doe has arranged his goods. You can read the advertisements in the newspapers; you can stop to analyze those window displays which attract more than usual attention from the passersby.

Let me give you an illustration. One of our corrrespondents visited a store in a western city: the first thing that caught his eye was a new arrangement of electric light bulbs, which are staples in every hardware store. In this particular department, the manager had mounted several rows of sockets on the prominent side of a column near the entrance; in each socket burned a bulb; every type and size was included in the display.

"Why did you do that?" our man asked.

"Oh," the manager replied, "our bulbs were up against the wall, literally and figuratively. Now we're brightening up sales."

The greater portion of that last sentence is the title of an article included in our current issue.

Another example: Visiting a great department store, I found the cutlery section filled with people, all watching white-clad chefs carving and preparing food. There was a demonstrator for every kind of knife. Customers were being shown how to sharpen carvers, how to use fruit knives, how to trim roasts. Here was a good "story." The manager gave us pictures and data about sales; we

thought the event sufficiently important to be spread over two pages in the October number.

Simple, isn't it? Get out your Sunday paper and examine the advertisements. My own copy has several hints for stories. Here is one entitled "A Surprise Sale of Cutlery"; another, "October Sale of Housewares"; a third, "Pre-Holiday Offering of Electric Appliances." Of course I shall look into these; the advertisements, clipped from the paper, will make good illustrative examples. The managers will be glad to tell me all about the sales; like all other men, they welcome an opportunity to broadcast their accomplishments. Who knows if the owners of a big store in Chicago or San Francisco are not seeking a new manager?

If I were a free-lance writer, and not an editor, I should do just the same—but I'd sell my articles for from ten to fifteen dollars each. And while in those stores, I'd look into the millinery department and the furniture floor to see if I couldn't glean something further.

How to write these stories? If you can write anything, you can do trade copy. The average news story is a perfect outline—your contribution must comprise a "lead" or opening, an example, the detailed body, and a good closing. Let there be no "fine writing"—unless by that term you mean an accurate choice of words and good handling—and keep your story under a thousand words. Unless your article is exceptional it will not merit more than one full page and a half-page continuation.

Above all, your contribution must be news. It may take you some time, and cost you several disappointments, before you are able to distinguish between the novelty and the convention—but once you have learned, you will always remember. Scorn borrowings from published material, but don't be too proud to stoop low enough to appraise and analyze the other contributors' work. And coupled with the query, "Is it news?" is the other all-important test, "Did it work?"

What is y o u r contribution worth? At the present time, the average trade journal pays one cent per word, with a bonus for illustrations, usually on publication. However, when free-lance writers begin to appreciate the requirements of the trade field, so that valuable editorial time need not be spent on rewriting and condensing, the market will improve. Really, it's up to you.

When earth's last picture is painted, and the tubes are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colors have faded, and the youngest critic has died
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it—lie down for an eon or two,
Till the Master of all Good Workmen shall set us to work anew!

—RUDYARD KIPLING.

$1000 a Word

Homer A. Parsons

It Seems Like a Fairy Story but It is Hard Fact, with a Delightful Surprise in Store—if You Win

DID you ever hear of the study of Greek paying dividends — cold cash dividends? Neither did I, until it actually happened to me, and paid at the rate of $1,000 a word. The fact that I sold only one word in September doesn't alter the importance of the lesson it taught me —that a writer cannot afford to despise anything that has happened to him, even a course in Greek!

In August, 1926, the billboards up and down the West Coast announced a prize of $1,000 for a name best describing a new gasoline. Having waited until the last day, almost the last hour, I stood in the lobby of the post office with official blanks before me, trying to conjure up a name that would suggest a superior motor fuel. Aristocrat? Aristo had already been used to name a motor oil, but the *crat* part—what did that mean?

A dozen years or so ago a part of my brain had marched boldly with Cyrus through The Anabasis, only to flounder and sink a term or two later in the depths of Plato's "Apology." I had given up my Greek for lost, but here it came to my rescue, and hinted that *crat* signified "rule". Aristocracy, rule of the best; plutocracy, rule of wealth; democracy, rule of the people. Well, what would the new gasoline rule? Motors, certainly. Then "Motor-crat"? Not quite euphonious. Then "Moto-crat"? That's better. And I wrote it on the ballot. Exactly one month later the president of the General Petroleum Corporation handed me a check for $1,000.

I suppose nearly every reader of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY has taken part, some time or other, in a name or slogan contest. But how many know the "inside working" of one? In a conversation with the judges I learned how one big contest was conducted, so I pass the information along for the benefit of those who compete for future prizes.

In the first place, when nearly 800,000 names flood the office of the contest manager, it is obvious that eight judges cannot check them all. In this case, the General Petroleum Corporation made up an arbitrary list of names it did *not* want: combinations of speed, zip, dash, miles, energy; names of persons, prominent and otherwise; trade names already in use (there were thousands who sent in "Per-

fection"!); names frivolous and absurd.

A large staff of clerks was put to work sorting out the seven tons of mail, eliminating the undesirables—which of course constituted a vast majority of the names sent in. The eligible list was then rechecked and narrowed down to about 200, and then sent to the judges, who had by this time a task within reason.

The close grading of the judges awarded the prize to "Moto-crat" rather than "Motorcrat" (which was sent in by a competitor) because of its slightly greater euphony, and because the hyphenated word, with four letters on each side of the hyphen, was evenly balanced, and hence *better adapted to advertising purposes.* It is well to keep these italicized words in mind when writing names and slogans.

After the winning name had been selected, the entire list was checked again for duplicates or near duplicates, and it was found that contestants had entered "Motorcrat", "Motorcratic", and "Motocraft". Each has been awarded an "approximations" prize of $100, by way of consolation—one hundred dollars a word, at that!

There is a rapidly widening field for the name-and-slogan writer, as national advertisers realize the value of contests to awaken public interest in their products. Prize novels bring profit to writer and publisher alike; and prize names reward the donor as well as the recipient. And if you don't believe that everyone is trying his hand at the game, just ask your Brunswick dealer how many blanks he has given out for the contest which closed December 15. There are dozens of prize contests in full swing right now, each one offering you an opportunity to exercise your cleverness and ingenuity, and above all, your ability to condense and concentrate. If you can coin a word or a slogan which is simple, catchy, significant and adaptable to advertising purposes, you have an excellent chance to appear in the finals, even if you fail to capture the big prize.

By the time this appears in print, hundreds of thousands of contestants will be awaiting the decision of the judges in the Paige-Jewett contest, ending October 31. The man or woman who has sent in the name selected for the new four-door sedan will receive $10,000—a 900% increase over my gift from General "Pete". Ten thousand dollars for a word or two! Isn't that enough to make Fannie Hurst jealous? Of course, I'm hot on the trail, and would like to win, but perhaps some reader of these lines has beat me to it. If so, I hope Dr. Esenwein invites him into these columns to tell how it was done. It would be interesting to learn what sluggish memory, what drowsy brain-cell had been prodded into activity to set a new record in dollars per word. [The invitation is hereby extended; but the real Motor-crat who wins $10,000 by a word may feel too Patrician to wish to appear on these democratic pages!—J. B. E.]

Humor and Its Possibilities

Emil Zubryn

Humor Has a Serious Side That is Disclosed When We Bring It to Market—Hence These Pages of Counsel and Lists of Buyers

I WILL endeavor to show in this article briefly and in a general way the possibilities and the marketing of all sorts of humorous material.

In the first place, let us divide humor into its various branches. By a careful study we find that magazine humor is divided into epigrams, paragraphs, anecdotes, jokes, limericks, humorous verse in general, parodies, satire, stories and skits. I take it for granted that readers know the meaning of these terms and therefore shall not go into a long and dry explanation of each one separately. It would take too long to do so, and it has no connection with this article.

Humor, contrary to many reports, is a well-paying field and well worth cultivating. Everyone likes to laugh; that is the "why" of the comic strips of our daily papers. You will notice, also, that more and more the papers are buying humorous prose and verse from the syndicates. This opens up to the humorist another market. Then, besides the newspapers we have monthly periodicals that run humor pages, and humorous magazines. Also, many of the trade publications and house organs buy humor if it comes up to their editorial standard—which is almost always specialized.

When I say "humor" I mean both verse and prose. If you have the ability to produce humor that is original and mirth-provoking, there is no reason why you should not be able to make a living from this branch of writing. I am doing it, and am successful in a fair way.

Originality is not only one of the prime factors of humor but also essential to a would-be humorist, for there is nothing an editor detests so cordially as a plagiarist, a man who can not or will not be original. Therefore be very careful when you write down a joke that a friend tells you is original, for in all probability he has read it or heard it, and then claims it as his own invention.

The payment one should expect for his material is an important matter. I here tabulate the common forms:

Jokes:—Some of the lesser magazines, such as the religious publications, pay from 50c to $1.50 each. But there are the higher grade of magazines, such as Life,

that pay from $1.00 to $5.00 per joke.

Epigrams:—From 20c to $5.00.

Limericks: — From $1.00 to about $5.00.

Humorous verse: — Payment from 10c a line to a dollar a line.

Skits and Stories:—Paid for on the basis of from 1c to 20c a word.

The foregoing is a general statement gathered from my experience with various magazines. It is a known fact that many men make a living today by writing jokes alone. A beginner starting in this branch should take it up first in his spare time, when he is reasonably sure that he can earn sufficient money by writing, he can then make it his profession. Too great haste in burning one's bridges often spells disaster.

Before you even think of sending out manuscripts you should have the following material on hand: 100 jokes; 100 epigrams; 100 anecdotes; 100 paragraphs; 100 limericks; 50 verses; 15 skits of about 300 to 500 words; 5 stories of 1,500 to 3,000 words. When you have this material you are ready to market your wares. Naturally, this covers the whole field, and not all writers can wisely attempt this. Too, the numbers given must be taken as approximate.

The importance of having much material prepared in advance lies in the fact that as you send the material out some will sell and some will come back. If you think that these latter are good—and they should be—you will send them out repeatedly, trying the best-paying markets first. Naturally, frequent revision, especially with a view to adapting your work to special markets, will add to the sales total.

Before taking up the question of marketing the material I should like to make a few suggestions that I have found practical in the writing of humor. The best way to send jokes is to type them on slips of paper 3 2-3 by 8½ inches in size. You can obtain this size by having an 8½ by 11 sheet cut into three parts. Double space when writing your jokes, and put your name on each slip. Epigrams and limericks should be treated in the same way. Ten jokes is sufficient matter to send to one periodical at a time, and these ten should occupy ten slips of paper. When you put them into an envelope to be mailed they will take a two-cent stamp.

When sending out verse and longer humorous material send only one or two of each kind. The reason is that if you send one poem or one story at a time the editor will be able to examine it thoroughly, whereas if you send more material the chances are that he will only read the first, and if that is not good he will take it for granted that the rest are also of no consequence.

There now remains the question of marketing the material. It would be well to keep on hand recent copies of the magazines for which you intend to contribute. Then, when you have occasion to send out material to a magazine you will be able to study their

needs. If you choose the wrong market you not only squander postage but also waste an editor's time and try his patience.

When you have selected probable markets for your material do not stop working, but "keep the ball rolling" by writing more material. By keeping steadily at it, sooner or later you are bound to succeed—if your material is good.

Once you have sold material, and your work is known in several places, the going will not be so hard, but you must be careful that the standard of your work does not drop; for if it does, you will get the unpleasant shock of rejection slips aplenty.

Next let me discuss a few of the things that a writer needs, mainly in the way of equipment. A typewriter is of course necessary, and it would be well to have a desk; however, you can do without one. Instead of using *merely* a market guide—and "Where and How to Sell Manuscripts" is excellent—get together on record cards a list of the publications you wish to write for and keep it up to date by noting their requirements, from experience, observation, and the market notes printed monthly in this periodical. This is all the material you need, besides paper, envelopes, stamps, and the like.

I have a good system of keeping track of jokes and other humorous material. Briefly, it is this: Suppose I send 10 jokes to Whiz Bang. These are numbered from one to ten. On the first sheet I have the "batch number," which is, say, Number 47. The next batch of jokes will be 48; and so on. You will find this easier than putting down the title of each joke, and it fits on a record card ruled something like this diagram:

BATCH No. 47		10 JOKES
Date Sent	Where Sent	Comments
5-16-26	Whiz Bang	Sold $5.00

If, in whole or in part, the manuscripts do not sell on the first trip, you make up a new batch, properly number and file your carbons, and send out the batch to another market, and write its name under the first on the card.

These cards you can file in an ordinary record-card box, or even in a pasteboard shoe box.

Just a word about the markets. You will find that fair treatment, and when manuscripts are accepted the rule, "pay on acceptance." Perhaps some would like to contribute to the foreign magazines, such as Punch, The Passing Show, etc. If so, it is best to procure several copies and try to conform to their viewpoint, because the British tone is entirely different from ours. However, general prose and verse will be accepted from Americans and Canadians by the British periodicals if the material is of the right sort.

In all your writing, whether it be jokes, extended prose, or verse, remember this: Not only must your material be as good as that published in a given magazine but IT MUST BE BETTER, if you expect it to be accepted. That is to say, you must write better material than that of the regular contributors. Once you do this, you will have the satisfaction of getting your name into print.

A HANDY LIST OF HUMOR MARKETS

The list of magazines that follows is not a complete list of all magazines that purchase humor. If a complete list were made it would take up too much space. If a writer is really interested he will supplement this list with one of his own, and if he does he will be surprised to find how many publications use humor. This list was compiled for my personal use and includes the better magazines that pay a good rate for humor.

American Lawn Tennis, 461 Eighth Ave., New York City. S. Wallis Merrihew, Editor: Uses light verse, humor, anecdotes; must be highly specialized. Payment on publication, from ½c to 1c a word.

American Mutual Magazine, 254 State St., Boston. Carl S. Crummett, Editor: Jokes and skits of not more than 500 words. Also an occasional poem. Payment on acceptance, from 1c to 5c a word. Prompt reports.

America's Humor Quarterly, 608 S. Dearborn St., Chicago. Material from 2-line jokes to short-stories considered—1st class rates.

Apropos, 4223 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, Mo. H. A. Perrill, Editor: Light verse on motoring topics. Does not want "flivver" humor. Pays on publication at 1c a word. Prompt reports.

Baseball Magazine, 70 Fifth Ave., New York City. F. C. Lane, Editor: Verse, humor, anecdotes, on all sports in season. Payment made on publication. Reports in two weeks.

Child Life Magazine, 536 South Clark St., Chicago. Rose Waldo, Editor: Humorous stories, anecdotes, jokes, etc., for child reading. Payment made two or three weeks after acceptance at ½c to 1c a word. Reports promptly.

Christian Herald, Bible House, New York City. Rae D. Hinkle, Managing Editor: Uses considerable short verse, and some jokes—if they are clean. Pays from 1 to 2c per word on acceptance.

Country Gentleman, Independence Square, Philadelphia. L. A. Schuler, Editor: Short light verse. Jokes and short humor for "Chaff" department. Pays on acceptance at good rates.

Countryside, D. C. Cook Pub. Co.,

Elgin, Ill. D. C. Cook, Jr., Editor: Light verse of country life. Jokes, epigrams, conundrums of interest to farm readers. Payment on acceptance at fair rates.

College Humor, 1050 North LaSalle St., Chicago. H. N. Swanson, Editor: College stories, with love element; light verse. Payment on acceptance. Reports promptly.

Farm Life, Spencer, Indiana. G. Weymouth, Editor: Verse, jokes. Pays 1c to 5c per word. Prompt reports.

Follies, 109 West 49th St., New York City. J. Burten, Editor: Short-stories of 1,000 words, verse of 6 stanzas, burlesque sketches, jokes, etc. Pays 1c to 2c a word on publication. Reports in two weeks.

Forbes, 120 Fifth Ave., New York City. B. C. Forbes, Editor: Jokes that will appeal to business men. Pays from $1 to $5.00.

Fun Shop, 250 Park Ave., New York City. M. F. Judell, Editor: Humorous verse of 24 lines, epigrams, mottoes, jokes, anecdotes, burlesques, satire and bright sayings of children. Pays from $1.00 to $10.00 per contribution; and 25c to $1.00 a line for verse.

Good Hardware, 912 Broadway, New York City. G. H. Hanchet, Editor: Jokes, epigrams, and humorous situations about hardware stores. Address editor of "VICE", c/o Good Hardware. Pays $2.00 for all material.

Harper's Magazine, 49 East 33rd St., New York City. T. B. Wells, Editor: Short essays and humorous and satirical articles. Pays on acceptance at 5c a word.

International Railway Journal, 40 South Seventh St., Philadelphia. $1.00 for each joke published concerning railway or steamship travel.

Judge, 627 West 43rd St., New York City: All sorts of humor. Pays on publication, 1c and 2c a word. Verse, 50c a line.

Ladies' Home Journal, Independence Square, Philadelphia. B. W. Currie, Editor: Light verse and humor for "Office Dog" page. Pays on acceptance.

Laughter, 584 Drexel Bldg., Philadelphia. Wm. H. Kofoed, Editor. All forms of humor. Pays on acceptance.

Life, 598 Madison Ave., New York City. R. E. Sherwood, Editor: All sorts of humor, poems, epigrams. Mss. reported on promptly, and payment on acceptance.

New Yorker, 225 West 45th St., New York City: Light verse and humorous sketches. Rates good.

Northwestern Miller, 118 South 6th St., Minneapolis, Minn.: Anecdotes concerning mills and millers. Pays $1.00 and up per anecdote.

Our Navy, 81 Sands St., Brooklyn, New York: Sketches, anecdotes and jokes of naval life. Pay $1.00 and up.

Packing House News, 301 Warner Bldg., Tampa, Fla. T. H. Hewlett, Editor: Jokes for humor page. Pays $1.00 and up for jokes.

Paris & Hollywood, Robbinsdale, Minn. J. Smalley, Editor: Short jokes of screen stars, etc. Pays on acceptance.

Paris Nights, 584 Drexel Bldg., Philadelphia. Wm. H. Kofoed, Editor: Humorous poetry with sex element. Jokes and stories. Pays on acceptance.

Progressive Grocer, 912 Broadway, New York City. $2.00 for jokes, epigrams and puns. Address, Follies Editor, c/o The Progressive Grocer.

Public Speaker Magazine, Harrisburg, Pa: Material for speakers. Humorous, etc. Pays on acceptance.

Radio Broadcast, Doubleday Page Co., Garden City, L. I., New York: Humorous stories on some phase of radio.

Saturday Evening Post, Independence Square, Philadelphia. **Thomas H. Masson,** Editor of "Short Turns & Encores": Jokes, light verse, wit, humor, satire. Unusual contributions featured. High rates on acceptance.

Science & Invention, 53 Park Place, New York City: Jokes used in "Scientific Humor" column.

Snappy Stories, 627 West 43rd St., New York City. Florence Haxton, Editor: Prose sketches, epigrams and verse, humorous stories. Pays 1½c a word for fiction, 50c a line for verse, and 3c a word for short prose, on acceptance.

Sunset Magazine, 460 Fourth St., San Francisco. Address, Humor Editor. Jokes, jingles and funny stories. Pays on acceptance from $1.00 to $5.00.

Theatre Magazine, 2 West 45th St., New York City. A. Hornblow, Editor: Verse, humor and anecdotes of and about stage and screen players.

Town Topics, 2 West 45th St., New York City. J. A. Mayer, Editor: Humor, 300-word fillers, epigrams, and some verse—if clever. Pays one month after acceptance.

True Story Magazine, 1926 Broadway, New York City. $2.00 per joke for the "Laughs from Life" department.

Whiz Bang, Robbinsdale, Minn. W. H. Fawcett, Editor: Jokes, poetry, and humorous articles with a farm twist.

Writer's Monthly, Springfield, Mass. J. Berg Esenwein, Editor: Jokes for the "Smile Corner". ½c a word; 25c a line for original verse.

World Humor, 608 South Dearborn St., Chicago: All kinds of humor, from 2-line joke to 3,000-word stories. Good rates on acceptance.

Young Judean, 114 Fifth Ave., New York City: Jokes and verse with Jewish spirit.

Canada

Goblin, 272 Bay St., Toronto, Canada. This magazine is like the American Life or Judge, and the same material can be sent to it. Material reported on in 4 or 5 days. Pays on acceptance.

British

The following British publications print humor only, but there are also many magazines that have humor pages that are not listed here. The rates are the same as our magazines pay.

Bystander, Graphic Office, Tallis St., London, E.C.4: Short and humorous skits. Pays on acceptance at fair rates.

Chips, Fleetway House, Farringdon St., London: Brief stories and comic sketches.

Humorist, 8 Southampton St., London, E.C.2: Humorous verse and jokes.

Jester, Farringdon St., London, E.C.4: Sketches, jokes, etc.

Passing Show, 93 Longacre, London, W.C.2: Sketches, jokes, topical verse.

Punch, 10 Bouverie St., Fleet St., London, E.C.4: Short humorous sketches, parodies, poems, etc.

SUCCESS, n. The temporary accumulation of a stack of chips which permits the temporarily comfortable feeling that at last one has temporarily beaten the gang that runs the table.—*Cynic's Dictionary.*

Get a Department

Nemo

More than Fifty Periodicals and Several Syndicates Use the Work of the Writer of the Article, So Our Readers May Accept Its Statements With Confidence

ONE of the surest signs of advancement, to the free lance, is his assignment to a department. When you are put in charge of such a section in a periodical you are virtually editor of that much space. You will not have the final say, nor will you know, to a word, just what will go in, for the copy editor may have to write the last paragraph over, or delete it entirely, to fit the amount of space available, but you are the editor of that part of the magazine just the same, and for that reason your responsibility increases tremendously.

When you send an editor a miscellaneous script, the final decision rests with him, and when it is printed, he helps to shoulder the responsibility. When you get a department, it simply means that he has removed from his shoulders just that much work.

And so departments are usually paid for accordingly. A column or a department in a magazine paying an average rate of 2 cents a word may jump the department rate to 4 cents; and if the department editor can sustain or build up interest, the good publishers may even raise the ante again.

This thing of wondering about every blessed manuscript that you send out gets tiresome to the point of boredom after the novelty of seeing your stuff in print has worn off. The acquisition of a department makes just that much sure, each month. Two departments mean that much larger a guarantee that you are in for three "squares" a day, and so on.

But before you can lay claim to a department—before you are justified in even approaching an editor with a specific department plan—you must attain to at least some sort of reputation for a particular kind of writing. If you ask an editor to let you run a beauty column, perhaps under a highly colorful pen name, and have a background of a hundred acceptances from farm papers on articles or scripts pertaining to farming, that editor's first impulse will be to laugh. The second—and it is likely to come to him quickly—will be to take advantage of a rare chance to wax sarcastic, to the tune of wondering "just why in

—— you think you can conduct a beauty column."

If you write about home cooking, know your subject, and have access to the answers to all sorts of questions on the subject, preferably in your head, but at least in available books; then naturally look for a magazine which might and perhaps should wish a department on cooking.

You can often run through smaller magazines — perhaps a small, but aspiring and deserving trade journal—and suddenly perceive that a certain department would not only increase reader-interest, but stimulate advertising. Advertising makes or breaks the average magazine. Many fictional periodicals carry little or none, nor need they. Their paper stock is cheap, the price per issue is high. The subscriptions and news stand sales turn in a profit. But the average magazine editor is looking for an idea that will cooperate with and stimulate those firms that are prospective advertisers.

During the past five years I have edited a dozen departments. Some were failures. Others "proved out." Only one or two have lived through more than one season. One magazine "broke in my face". (The ex-editor, however, wrote just last week offering to pay what he owed, if he could depend on more material from this office. The idea seemed to be that the defunct magazine was about to be revived.)

My first attempt along this line was first to decide that I wanted a department. Just what it was to contain seemed of secondary importance. In short, I was after some glory. Yes, the price had to be good. So I wrote 100 letters to 100 magazines asking for a department. Something like 87 editors wrote back that they had nothing in mind just at this time, but would "keep the suggestion at hand . . ." Thirteen other editors didn't reply.

The second attempt came two years later when I decided to get a department telling farmers how to save time and labor—in short, a department of "kinks" and labor-saving devices. I wrote most of the farm papers about the plan, telling in choice phrases just why they ought to have me handle this space. The gist of the return replies summed up the fact that some of the farm papers already had departments along varying yet somewhat similar lines, and the other answers showed that they didn't want any such thing. The idea didn't "take."

Then came a chance to edit a department of three pages in an out-door magazine. This included the making of finished drawings, but as the pay consisted of $5 a page (1000 words and two drawings), and on publication, it didn't take long to prove that that particular pay wasn't worth the candle.

A year later a new magazine offered me the chance to take over space for a department. We worked out the details, although the general policy was pretty well laid down, too. The thing worked out, and is still in existence. This one department some months pays

a good full-time salary, and the work seldom takes more than three days, although there are many letters to answer, and my sub-conscious mind, at least, is busy on it the whole month through. Other departments, all in monthly magazines, assure an approximate aggregate monthly income slightly in excess of $5000 a year, with about half the time taken. But this isn't net. There's an artist's salary to pay, as well as that of a stenographer.

But back to the point. If you honestly want a department, it will be only a question of time until you get it, provided your desire is big enough and lasts long enough. Don't bother by writing to an editor whose paper shows that he could not possibly use your stuff in this form. The best plan is to keep in touch with all the magazines you can lay hands on. Search your mind constantly for what you know and can learn all about. Perhaps THE IDEA will come while you are idly thumbing through a back copy of some particular periodical and so suggest an outlet for your knowledge. And by the way, the resourceful writer looks at the possibilities as much from the advertising as from the reader-angle. If you hatch a department idea that will build up reader-interest and at the same time actually cooperate with the advertisers—as a whole, not with individual space-users—you have only to sell the editor on paper. After conceiving the idea, walk around it, figuratively, several times, to get the view from all sides.

If the department idea still looks to be as good as when it first came, sit down in the radiance of your first enthusiasm and write *one* editor of *one* magazine—not every one in the field. Tell him, if you wish, that you aren't writing to anyone else. It will please him. Then, after an introductory paragraph, get down to brass tacks and give him a line of real sales talk. Ask for his reaction to the general idea. If he writes back and asks for more specific information, give it to him, hot from the shoulder. In this second letter discuss rates, policy, department heading, amount of space, and other details.

The editor's second reply will then tell you what's going to happen. When you read it you will know whether it's a "go" or not. If he objects to any of your plans, or suggests minor changes, you can make concessions, of course. If he offers a satisfactory rate, and an amount of space you can handle, lose no time in getting your acceptance into the mail.

Then will follow the okeying of your first offering. When you learn the closing date of the magazine, push that date ahead a week, for your own purposes, and mark the day of each month on your calendar in red ink. That's the day your department instalment *must* be in the mail. I don't mean closing date so much as the date when the material is to be in the editor's hands.

Nor is there any objection,

usually, to conducting more than one department, if they are along different lines and appear in non-competing fields. When you get your department you can rightfully feel that you are a definite part of the magazine. And the time occasionally comes when the personnel of the editorial office is changed. Good editors may go higher and out, leaving an opening. You have a much better chance at occupying an editor's chair if you have handled a page a month than if you have been only a contributor.

The Sport Story

L. E. Eubanks

Clean-Cut and Authoritative Suggestions that Will Prove Helpful to All Who Wish to Write Fiction of this Special Type

ATHLETIC games of all kinds are so popular the world over and the magazines use so many of them that nearly every writer who knows or thinks he knows some sport particularly well is tempted to write a story around that game.

And most of them yield to the temptation; I doubt there being any other theme, unless it be love, that has been essayed by so many writers—at any rate, men writers. It looks so easy! Nowadays everyone believes in physical exercise and knows enough about the subject to think that he knows more. The story of college life surely would not be natural without the school rivalries on track and field; business and sport are often well blended in fiction; and the hero of a love story is often an athlete who has won his spurs—the subject seems almost ready made.

So the beginner at sport-story writing has great confidence. He sees the sport element in so many kinds of stories that he figures the type to be an almost certain winner. He knows baseball, for instance, better than Mr. So-and-so, who appears in Top Notch; and "no writer could know more about boxing," for has he not fought a few preliminaries himself?

Perhaps he goes over stories he sees in various magazines, several times, and analysis shows him many places that could be improved (?) by amplification and explanation. Then he rushes to his typewriter.

And right there is likely to be the trouble. He plays up the sport—and forgets the story. Not even the less important periodicals, or the boys' magazines, will take a sport story just because the sport-element is well handled. As one editor told me, if readers are looking for knowledge of the game itself

they will buy a book on it or read articles that teach it. A story is what the fiction magazines want, not a treatise; and sport must appear as a cause rather than as an end; as a pervasive background, not as a semi-fictional record.

I know boxing as only a few fictional writers do, yet a 5000-word yarn of mine, "Ten Round Tim McGrew", has been out twenty times and is not yet accepted. I can now see that there is too much fight and not enough plot. Also, I know something of basketball, but "The Wasted Star" was offered to nine magazines before it found a home.

It does not matter how well you "know your stuff" on the sport itself, the plot and all the other elements of a story have to be handled with just as much skill as in other kinds of fiction. You can write an article making it 80 percent football, 20 percent literary craftsmanship, and probably sell it; but in a football *story* you had better reverse these proportions.

On the other hand, you must know the sport you select as a background—just as you must be accurate in the other elements, such as setting, characterization, etc. Even if you make a mistake and it gets by the editor, some reader will "call" you on it, and that will injure your standing with that magazine. The sport story is the very worst of all in this respect. There are "fans" for every kind of sports, so interested and well informed that you simply can't get by them with any technical error. I had such an experience with a football story once, and before I recovered from the deluge of critical letters from readers I doubted that I knew a thing about the game.

Every sport has its rules of course, and these are often changing. Merely to have seen tennis played and picked up a portion of the court vernacular is no adequate preparation for the writing of a tennis story. Dig into the rules—the very latest ones—and make sure that your hero does not violate any of them. Don't let any character in a boxing story win a contest with a "rabbit punch", a "kidney punch" or a "pivot blow" just because these terms sound good to you; because these are fouls and will not be permitted by careful referees.

In one football story I read, the star was described as being easily distinguishable in the formation because his "powerful hips loomed high"; but the fact is that all stars play low, as close to the ground as they can get and yet retain power and spring in the thigh muscles.

Perhaps some of the things I am saying are discouraging, but my aim is to show that the sport story is no "snap", for it requires just as much preparation and care as other types of fiction. Usually the thrilling scene is the athletic contest, and I should say that in this it demands even exceptional story-telling talent, because the writer is held to a small range of variation; he has to stay within the rules of the game, and finds it hard to originate any new and brilliant performance for his hero. This

has much to do with the fact that so many stories dealing with the same game are very much alike. Only occasionally does one rise far above the average, and then it is the work of a skillful writer. Is not that significant?

The sport story is virtually seasonal material. If you want to place a basketball story with a magazine that makes up its issues three or four months ahead, you must not wait till January to write it. Basketball follows football, and your story should be looking for a port in the autumn. Like all seasonal material, the sports story often has to be held over till the next year—and in the meantime changes of rules, losses of championship, etc., may develop inaccuracies in your yarn. Be sure to go over your sport story of 1926, with these dangers in mind, before you send it out for the 1927 season.

I am not appending a list of magazines that buy sport stories; practically all the fiction magazines use them more or less frequently—though the periodicals for women do not buy so many, and naturally impose certain restrictions in treatment.

The boys' magazines are a good market, often taking an athletic yarn that the writer originally intended for an adult's publication. Many of the sport stories intended for boys' and girls' papers are too juvenile and "moral-heavy", and fail for that reason. Needless to say, the gambling element must not be present in a story aimed at boys' magazines. Most of them bar stories of the ring or the race track.

It is well to remember that those magazines that have been specializing on sport stories for years have used a surprising number of yarns about the most common sports—baseball, football and boxing. A selection of some game not so frequently used by writers may increase your chances for success, particularly if your setting is attractive. One of the best sport stories I ever read dealt with an American athlete in India who tried to learn some of the natives' games. Most of the boys' magazines are glad to consider a story that introduces a new sport.

The basis of our government being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide, whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.—THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Behind the Scenes with the Dramatic Critic

R. Addison Adams

II.

The Second and Concluding Paper on a Subject of Importance to Those Who Wish to Specialize in This Phase of Journalism

A GLANCE at dramatic criticisms written during the past few years shows that they are no longer worthy of the name, but should be designated as reviews. In the days of William Winter and some of the other famous old-time critics one new "show" a week on Broadway during the season was exceptional. Hence a long and minutely technical criticism of play and players could be indulged in without working harm to either the critic or the space allotted by the paper.

Now things are different. One week in October there were eighteen new plays brought to Broadway, and of course each play required newspaper comment. That is one of the reasons why reviews are no longer criticisms. The busy critic must be satisfied merely to review the production by telling what it is and how it was received. He leaves his real criticism to his one weekly general article, usually to be found in the Sunday paper. Therefore, outside of the vast amount of knowledge of the theater the critic has had to absorb in order to write with authority, his job is little different from that of the reporter who goes to cover the Governor's reception.

There is one strong difference, however: the critic writes editorially. He says "I think", or "in my opinion", instead of having to say "the Governor said." In the same manner as the editorial writer he is expressing the opinion of his paper on this play, but he is doing it—at least in many cases—personally.

A dramatic critic who loves the theater will always work with the thought in his mind that there is some good in all forms of entertainment. He will look for the good rather than the bad, but he will not overlook the bad, nevertheless. By pointing out the poor spots he is doing a favor to the theater manager, the people that attend the theater, and even the players themselves. It may be possible to eliminate the bad spots, if they are not too numerous.

The critic should also always consider the "show" from the viewpoint of the kind of audience it attracts. One does not expect a burlesque show to draw the same

kind of audience as does Mrs. Fiske in "The Rivals". Yet, to the patrons of the burlesque, that show may be as perfect in every way as is "The Rivals" to the other audience. The critic may not agree with the audience, but if the audience likes it then it is "a good show."

The critic should be severest with the production that has been advertised as the most perfect, and for which the highest admission price is charged. As admission prices and advertised qualities slacken, then the critic should let the intensity of his criticism slacken, too.

A dramatic critic, whether reviewing the "speakies" or the "movies", should always use plain newspaper English in his reviews. He is writing for the mass of newspaper readers, and they are found in all classes. He should not write solely to the educated or solely to the uneducated, but should strike a happy medium, as the old phrase has it.

With regard to the use of plain, understandable newspaper English in writing reviews, the following lines are interesting. They were written by Glenn Frank, for many years editor of the Century Magazine, and now president of the University of Wisconsin. A man of his caliber does not have to plead for simplicity because of a lack of words. When launching a daily syndicated editorial to be used in hundreds of newspapers throughout the country, he said:

"I am hopeful because I think both journalism and education can do their best work in the no-man's land that lies between the very high highbrow and the very low lowbrow.

"The very low lowbrow writer underestimates our intelligence, and so is disgusting.

"The very high highbrow writer overestimates our information, and so is unintelligible."

The reviewer must constantly keep in mind that the mass of newspaper readers are people with a common education. Involved sentences and polysyllabic words are not the kind of fare for them. The reviewer is not writing to a handful of college professors or school teachers but to the thousands who fill the theaters from the boxes to the last seat in the gallery. In consequence, the language he uses must be understood as readily by Minnie of the ten-cent store as it is by Dean Wallace of the university law school.

Here is an actual review of a motion picture written in the objectionable style just described. This review does not even bear the excuse that the picture would not appeal to any but the masses. It is an excellent example of how not to review a picture.

"Parisian Nights," with Elaine Hammerstein and Lou Tellegen in the important parts, pursues the unavailing paths of immateriality. It jog-trots from one impartial posture to the next, stopping on its slender course, now and then, to allow one player or the other to attitudinize freely before the camera, until such time as it seems relevant to begin progress anew. A leisurely excursion in orthodox revelations of an inward emotion, it journeys by regular, plodding intervals to a somewhat rampant climax involving the brusque paroxysms of two turbulent and disorderly bands of [Paris] Apaches, each bent on annihilating his rivals. This final outburst of pent-up malignity energizes an otherwise inert production. Its hysterical convulsions are so drastic as to be not without force. A tumultuous scrap can redeem earlier stretches of too great a temperateness.

If it is bad form to write over the heads of the average readers it is equally as bad to go to extremes the other way and write too far down to them. The review should be dignified without being pedantic. It should be written in common, everyday language, but it should not be slangy. It should not start off "Hot Dawg! Lloyd is a wow in this one." Such language is emphatic and spectacular beyond a doubt, but it could not but offend those myriads of readers who, though they may use the same slang themselves, like to think that the person who wrote the review is above such expressions.

Simplicity is greatly to be desired in a review, but there is such a thing as too much simplicity. Here is another actual example of a published newspaper review. This, too, comes under the how-it-should-not-be-done heading:

Really, now, don't you like to get all wrapped up in a murder mystery?

You have a chance to get all mixed up in a juicy and human murder.

Your chance is at the Rialto where "The Goose Woman" is being presented. A rich man is murdered in the wee small hours of the mornin' near the gate of his country estate. Then the police and the reporters arrive. A middle-aged old woman, a regular old dirty hag, lives nearby on a goose farm. There is mystery about this creature. You learn that she has a glorious past. Twenty years ago she was a great opera singer and so on.

This review starts off like an ancient primer. What is a "juicy and human murder"? Here is simplicity that amounts almost to idiocy. It can not be accentuated too strongly that intelligence is the main asset of a reviewer, and that he must use it at all times.

While the dramatic reviewer i often faced with such a distressin poverty of words that it ofte seems necessary to use the sam hackneyed phrases over and ove again, there is no excuse in d parting from the vocabulary tha has been standardized by critic of the past, many of whom hav been among the most brillian writers of English.

The following quotation is take from an actual newspaper revie Not only is there no excuse fo using the word "theater" in thi manner but its constant repetitio makes decidedly bad composition

"Cobra", is sensational and successfu theater. It is cruel but dramatic, hars but real. If you fear women that chea mentally and physically then steer clea of "Cobra", but if you love heavil charged theater then do not pass up thi show.

I enjoyed "Cobra" as theater of th dramatic school. If you love dramati theater do not be afraid of "Cobra".

I do not mean to imply that it i always necessary or even desirabl to write in a staid and dignifie manner. There are some revie ers who can talk in an intimat and breezy way with their read ers, and those who have such faculty may well adopt that styl and maintain it at all times, fo as a rule it is very effective whe well done. Possibly one of the bes examples of this style is found i the daily column conducted b "Mae Tinee" of the Chicago Trib une. A sample of this writer' customary work, a review of Reg inald Denny's "California Straigh Ahead," follows:

GOOD MORNING!

When this picture starts, you'll say t yourselves: "NOW, WHERE did I se something just like this before?" In

minute, though, you'll get your bearings. It begins a lot like the racing pictures Wallace Reid used to play in.

AND continues much on the same order. AND finishes about as they did.

Reginald Denny, Universal's big, tempermental go-get-'em he-man, is the speedy son of a racing-car-manufacturer father, in the present case Gertrude Olmstead is the fair daughter of a rival manufacturer of racing cars. John Steppling is one fond papa. Gertrude's Fred Esmelton is the other fond papa—sometimes not so fond of Reginald.

Tom Wilson is a black Sambo, devoted valet of the speedy boy. Charles Gerrard is the OTHER MAN.

Reginald and Gertrude are engaged, and in the offing is a sweepstakes at Ascot track, where the cars of the two papas are entries.

As the picture opens, everything is set for a wedding. Reginald and Gertrude are to be married. The wedding, besides uniting the young couple, is expected to make the two fathers into business partners, and the goose is hanging high and everybody is happy until:

FATE TURNS AGAINST OUR HERO.

(Then follows the rest of the review in the same breezy style.)

Talking to your readers in this manner is effective because it is clever. Contrast it with the drivel of which the "Goose Woman" review is composed. The Tinee review has the same intimate tone, but it never once grows vulgar. It is written in decidedly lighter vein than is the ponderous "Parisian Nights" bombardment, but it is every bit as dignified and intelligent, without the addition of boresomeness.

Read the reviews that appear daily in the New York papers. The critics that write them are the best that can be obtained. They have reached the highest pinnacle of the profession, for it is really only in New York that dramatic criticism can make or break a play today. An adverse criticism outside of New York may cause the play to lose two or three hundred dollars a night, but can do it no lasting harm; whereas the report of the New York critics not only affects it in New York but wherever else it plays throughout the country.

You will find that dramatic critics are divided into two schools—those who use the personal pronoun "I", and those who write in the same style as that employed by the editorial writers of the paper. You must choose your own style here, but if your intelligence and knowledge of the theater is not on a par with that of the average reader of your paper, then your review is worthless. The ideal critic is not one who says "I did", or "I did not" like it, but the one who can say "the playgoer who likes this type of play" will either like it or dislike it, for not all people like the same kind of play. You must train yourself to be an "average playgoer."

Never pose as an aesthete, and never act as though you had learned all there is to know about the theater. You may be able to fool a few, but you cannot fool those who know the theater. Your influence and authority will be weakened with them by assuming. Be eager to learn, and never hesitate to ask questions.

The hardworking reviewer may pound away week after week without the faintest sign from his readers that his stuff is even read, to say nothing of being appreciated, but he can rest assured that there is one body of men that is not only reading every review he writes but is also discussing some of them—

this is the local theater managers' association.

The men that compose this august body meet every week, or every two weeks, or maybe only once a month; but the critics come in for their share of excoriation at many of the meetings. Sometimes their work is praised, but more often it is not mentioned—unless some manager or other has had his toes stepped on since the last meeting.

The view of the manager toward the reviewer and his work is often a peculiar one. No matter what is said about the show by the critic, whether it is praised or condemned, it is the theater manager who profits, because he is given so many inches of valuable space free in every review. Many people who read an unfavorable review go "to find out for themselves."

The matter of theater reviews was up for discussion at a recent meeting of the managers in a large middle-western city. The manager of a large vaudeville house had the floor.

"How," he asked, "can a critic, a newspaper man who only knows the theater from out in front, say definitely that a wire walking act is good or bad when even I, after twenty-seven years as a showman, cannot tell?"

The answer is obvious. The performers are either clever or they are not clever. They are above the ordinary, below the ordinary, or just ordinary. An act that has some new "stunts" to offer is better than one that does the old stunts cleverly, while one that does the old stunts awkwardly mus certainly be a poor act.

So, in addition to having to knov a world of things about the the ater, about newspapers and abou people, the critic must be a diplo mat. He must keep the theate managers happy, whether h praises their show or condemns it He must battle the general man ager of the paper he works for who believes that all shows should be praised if it will bring in great er advertising revenue.

He must slave along on what small salary the position offers, and it is never a large one. He must not expect thanks for his work if it is good, but he can expect blame for it if it is bad. In some other line of work a good critic could command a splendid salary and would make an excellent executive, but so long as he remains with a newspaper he must accept the lot of all other newspapermen.

This view may sound pessimistic, but it is only truthful. Still, in spite of it all, it is pleasant work most of the time, and those men who are dramatic critics because they like the theater remain in their jobs year after year, most of them until Father Time sends them before a higher Critic to read their own reviews written in a record that even Congress has so far found no way to make public.

As for my own work so far: I have loved the theater ever since I first saw "Uncle Tom's Cabin" one Christmas night so many years ago that all I distinctly re-

member is Little Eva going to Heaven and a tremendous crowd that always closed in in front of me just as soon as I caught a tiny glimpse of the stage, for I never did get a seat at that performance.

As soon as I was able to pick my own magazines I bought and read regularly the New York Dramatic Mirror, the New York Clipper, The Billboard, Variety, Theater Magazine, the Motion Picture News, and the Moving Picture World. I followed the careers of actors and actresses, the growth and development of the movies, the activities of "Tom," burlesque and boat shows, carnivals and minstrel troupes.

I never lost an opportunity to carry a spear with Mantell or to act as supernumerary with any extra large production that came along. Finally I worked into a stock company and played small parts for a couple of years. I played in "The Awakening of Helena Ritchie", "The Witching Hour", "The Easiest Way", and many plays of the kind with Nance O'Neil.

Then I drifted into newspaper work, starting at the very lowest rung that can be found, as copy-reader in the proofroom. My salary was $12 a week. Two months later I became a cub reporter covering a small town. I was promoted to the city staff, given one "beat" after another, each a little more difficult, and carrying a little bit more salary than the last. I was then made assistant city editor and finally city editor in a city of 130,000. I have been editor of a paper in a city of 13,000 and telegraph editor in a city of three million—the last, the Chicago Herald and Examiner, said to have the most exacting copy desk in the world.

All this time I was assisting the dramatic and literary editors. I was seeing every show—legitimate, vaudeville and motion pictures—that came to town. Hundreds of times I have paid my own money to see three different motion picture shows in a single night, starting at 6 o'clock and going steadily until 12.

I have been city editor of two papers, managing editor of two, and doing the theatrical, musical and literary reviewing always. It has been ten years since I first went to work in the editorial department of a newspaper. Throughout that ten years I have written theater reviews constantly, no matter what my regular position on the paper might be.

All this as a prelude to the declaration that if I can remain in the dramatic department for ten more years I hope I will have absorbed enough knowledge, and experienced enough of the theater and theatrical reviews, to be able to write on the theater with real authority. Until then I shall still consider myself a novice; so you who aspire to be dramatic critics can see something of what you have ahead of you.

Reading the Dictionary

Edith Cook Smith

What Sounds Like a Jerky Journey Will Prove to Be a Pleasant Jaunt if You Set About it Wisely

EVERYBODY has heard of the old lady who remarked that she had tried to read that big book by Webster, but found she couldn't — the subject changed so often! But perhaps everybody does *not* know that, at times, to read the dictionary is just exactly what we who sit, pen in hand, need to do—"pen in hand" being poetic license for a state of mind which induces a ready flow of ideas, whether by pen or typewriter.

If we conform to the excellent practice of grinding out a certain specified number of words per day, willy nilly, "in sickness and in health, for richer, for poorer," we are likely to grow stale if we add no new words to our vocabulary, or at least resurrect or refurbish a few old ones.

If you will glance over a few of your old standbys that, so far, have been equal to the famous Wandering Jew in the extent and continuation of their travels, you will doubtless find that you have been writing in circles: just so often, you used the word "surely," or "certainly"; or you brought out "absolutely," "and also," and a few other old friends to the light of day—with regularity. You had a succession of nouns that you trotted out like favorite horses, and your verbs were as common as dandelions. Result: monotonous writing; sentences motheaten, threadbare, nothing new.

You might try to "pep them up" a little—those antiques, I mean—by tricking them out with a few little-used words. You will be surprised how spicy it makes a sentence to drop out the true-and-tried ones, and run in a new line. It helps greatly to look up synonyms and antonyms in the back of the good old dictionary, and introduce some words that are not in common use by every school child.

There is, by the by, a great store of knowledge to be had for the reading in the back of this same volume: the evolution of dictionaries; a short course in practical English and punctuation; weights and measures; aviation, automobile, tennis, golf, baseball, football, naval and military terms; abbreviations; foreign phrases; forms of address; photographic and musical information; foreign names and phrases; and geographic facts. These are some of the

subjects touched upon, besides the definitions of words which we *expect* to find in this priceless book.

But there is another way in which the dictionary is useful to me and perhaps would be to others who have not tried it. I find it very inspirational actually to *read* the dictionary, not by any means word for word, but in the way that a bird flies over a garden or a field, swooping down to get a worm here or a cherry there and off again.

Let me illustrate. Perhaps I am in search of a word in the A's—I want its exact meaning; the word is *altruism.* I find the meaning, to be used in a story I am writing. Then as the book lies open on my desk I see *alpen-stock.* Why, that reminds me of a Swiss story told me by a friend traveling one late Fall in Switzerland—a story I had forgotten all about, and now comes to me entire. I make a note of it and resolve to get busy on it at the first possible moment. I turn a few pages. There staring me in the eye is that word *anthropomorphism*—I never *did* know what that meant! The definition sets me thinking along a line I shall use soon. Doesn't that make you want to look it up—unless you already have its meaning at your command?

I turn the page again. There is *bitter sweet.* What a title for a story, even though J. G. Holland did so entitle his long didactic poem. I can see my heroine right now! Yes, and the hero, too. He will be prosy short, and merry. She will be willowy and variable Yes, a story will grow out of the contrasting characters.

Next I read an interesting description about *cassava;* then about *Cimmerian* folk; what a *cubist* is, and the *Escurial.* The *fata morgana* intrigues me, and suggests a tale, as does the word *frill. Gingko* is interesting, and *Gypsy* and *Javanese*—as I flip over the leaves all hint at something that may be the germ of a great short story! Who knows?

Don't condemn this novel way of getting hints and suggestions until you have tried it. It works!

A Prayer

Not the quarry, but the chase;
Not the laurel, but the race;
Not the hazard, but the play,
Make me, Lord, enjoy alway.

—GELETT BURGESS.

Rejection Slips Are Steps Forward

C. Warden LaRoe

An Interview With Ben Ames Williams in Which a Commonplace Becomes a Striking Truth

EVEN a seasoned reporter who has been dipped in the brew of multifarious assignments and let stand until his resultant crust has become as hard and apparently impenetrable as rock now and then encounters a surprise.

One of that brand of shocks fell my way when, in the line of duty, I met Ben Ames Williams.

Long ago I had made my mental sketch of the author of "The Rational Hind." Having read his short-stories in The Saturday Evening Post, Collier's, Cosmopolitan, Red Book and The American Magazine, I admired the vigorous action he could write into a story and the powerful style of his characterization. But I was not to be fooled; had I served my "cub" days and covered every "run" from police to federal court in vain? I knew that men are not always what they seem.

I had Ben Ames Williams pigeon-holed as a quiet little chap with a shining bald head and an Adam's apple that played hide-and-seek with the world over the edge of a wrinkled collar. I would have sworn that he spent half of each working hour searching for mislaid shell-rimmed glasses. But I was wrong.

In answer to my knock at Mr. Williams' hotel room, a big, blond bulk filled the doorway. My eyes swept his frame from heel to head as I returned his greeting. That one glance took in a lot of territory.

Ben Ames Williams is big enough to throw an ice man over his own wagon. He has hands of which a pugilist might be proud. His brown hair leaves no bald spaces gaping on his head. Then, while we filled the air with blue smoke from foul pipes, I began my interview. I enjoyed it more than any of my motley experience, which has included everything from a what-color-do-you-like-best conversation with a beauty-contest winner to a friendly chat with "Two-Gun" Jim Lyon.

"How and where," I asked Mr. Williams first, "did you get the idea for 'The Question Puller'?" I meant of a story that appeared in a recent issue of Elks' Magazine. In it a prospector is driven by creeping insanity to shoot his

partner, who tantalizes him, while tinkering with an iron bar, by explaining that he is making a "question puller."

The author laughed.

"I was sitting in a cottage in Belfast one day with Bill Howard, a friend of mine. Howard took a two-by-four, and began making grooves in it. Then he tacked a piece of sheet cotton over the grooves. We joked often with each other, and I had a suspicion that he was making nothing, but merely using his tools. He refused to tell me what he was doing, and I warned him I'd put him in a story. I stuck the idea in my note book, kept it for years and finally wrote it."

I changed the subject. Time is an important factor with newspapers. I asked Mr. Williams how long he wrote before he actually "broke into the game."

"I began writing in 1910," he answered, "and wrote eighty short-stories and three serials before I had anything accepted." Since that time, in addition to many short-stories and serials, he has published nine books in this country and ten in England.

"What chance has the unknown author with editors?" I wanted to know.

"An editor would just as quickly buy a story from you as from me," he replied. "The only demand is that the story be interesting."

Then he gave me an example to prove the point. He told me of a friend who returned to the States, after some time away, with a desire to write stories. Mr. Williams read several, then suggested that the writer send them to The Saturday Evening Post. The Post accepted one, and later wrote to Mr. Williams to inquire concerning the man's character.

"There are a thousand ways to make a story interesting," the author told me, and you can do it by either slow action or rapid action.

"The new writer cannot always be the judge of his own work," he went on. "If he thinks his story is weak, he should not let that bar him from sending it to the editors of the better magazines. When a writer finishes a story, he is tired of it. He knows it all. And he can't judge accurately whether or not it is good."

Then Mr. Williams told me of a man who wrote a yarn and mailed it to one of the so-called better magazines. It came back, and after he had seen it rejected by seventeen other editors, he shipped it to his first love again and received a check.

Ben Ames Williams has regular office hours. He lives at Chestnut Hill, outside Boston, and each morning after breakfast he goes to his workroom in Boston, where he writes until noon.

"How did you get your start in the writing game?" I asked by way of a parting question.

His ever-ready grin flashed to his face. His answer was brief:

"By writing," he said.

I took his reply to mean this:

After you have written eighty short-stories and three serials your stuff ought to be good enough to sell.

Ways and Words of the Woodsmen

C. A. Emery

Another of Those Informative Articles that for Years Past Have Instructed Writers in the Use of Exact Terms in a Special Field

MODERN machinery has altered the mind and manners of the lumberjacks in the camps of the Pacific Northwest. Even the type, the racial traits and the background have changed. No longer do the long-haired men from the Michigan forests gather in the shanties of the far western woods and recount the prowess of Paul Bunyan and other legendary heroes. Both they and the shanties have vanished, for young fellows from Northern Europe now hold sway in the well-built camps and, as befits men whose ages range from twenty-five to forty years, who read the daily newspapers, who drive their own cars and who delight in getting distant stations for their nightly radio programs, their talk is of world-news, sporting events and touring tips for the trip they are planning during the next "shutdown" when the camps close for a few weeks at Christmas time, and, later on, in July when the fire hazard is greatest.

Outsiders who as a rule are prone to think of the woods work as an unorganized, haphazard sort of program learn upon closer contact the definitely planned, correlated functions of the working units that mark the routine of the normally active lumber camp. First of all there is the "cruiser" who, working alone and in advance of the future camp operation, "checks up" the standing timber in a certain area. His report is the official guide or estimate upon which later cutting and camp occupation is based and, in order to make sure that this report is accurate, another cruiser is often sent to cover the same territory and file his estimate, notes and comments regarding the locality under consideration.

The surveyor and his gang follow the footsteps of the cruiser, for they lay out the proposed extension of railroad, fix the site of the new camp and do all the preliminary work incident to establishing a strategic position and operative importance. As most of the camps in the Puget Sound

region are located thirty or more miles from tidewater, the connecting railroad simplifies the once arduous feat of "moving camp." This is now accomplished by having all the camp buildings mounted on "flat cars," which are "shunted" off on a switch or spur track close by the main line. In time of fire or other emergency the cars are quickly coupled together and hauled to safety or an entirely new location.

Gone are the old-time "shacks" where the men "batched and burrowed" in unsanitary surroundings. The newer habitations are built upon a standard measurement of fourteen by sixty feet and "families," or groups, are assigned in separate sections, their "house cars" or "car houses" so arranged that three or four rooms fill the maximum needs for absolute comfort. Bachelors are segregated in sections of "sleeping cars" that form the finest sort of dormitories, for each car thus apportioned contains six single iron beds, with lockers and easy chairs so the men may enjoy the same warm, well-lighted atmosphere that prevails in all of the camp houses, for hot and cold water, steam heat and electric lights are commonly-accepted adjuncts to life in the tall timber.

All bedding, including clean sheets, is furnished for the dormitory cars, and traveling libraries and telephone connection with the outside world add still further to the interest and entertainment of the camp dwellers, and every incentive is offered for the maintainance of personal cleanliness and general well being. "Wet all winter" no longer expresses the physical condition of the woodsmen, for wash rooms, drying rooms and bath houses make it possible for them to start out each day with clean, dry clothing.

"Blanket men," like the "bull teams," are memories of the past, for "bed rolls" have given way to compact, shiny suitcases wherein the loggers proudly "pack" the violently striped silk shirts, hosiery, handkerchiefs and neckwear that is so indicative of their changed outlook and acceptance of the new era.

In the "wild and wooly" days "logging outfits" might prosper upon an investment of a few hundred dollars, but the magic of machinery has imperatively restricted such small beginnings, for many of the present concerns total individual expenditures of millions of dollars. The more isolated camp often has its own school, housed in a "model building," with an accredited teacher in charge. Otherwise all camp activity is under control of the foreman or "camp boss" and the personnel includes his assistant, or "straw boss," a time keeper, who may also be the bookkeeper, purchasing agent and commissary clerk, as well as the cook and his assistant and their "flunkies" or helpers, in addition to the "regular crew" which, when the camp is "running double," or

"working two sides," may reach about an aggregate of ninety woodsmen.

The "high lead system" is operative in practically all the foothill camps, for the rugged contour of the country makes the old plan of "level logging" slow, difficult and dangerous. The "spar tree" of this overhead system stands like a giant Maypole in the center of a circle of eleven tall and equidistant growing trees that are firmly rooted in the earth. The "high rigger" selects and climbs the spar tree and gets it in shape for work. His is the only spectacular job in the modern camp. Guy lines, pulleys and a network of heavy wire cables are the practical paraphernalia of the spar tree.

"Axemen" undercut the trees which the "fallers" saw with their "cross-cuts" that, in keeping with the girth of the enormous trees, are of amazing size. A "filer" is employed especially for the purpose of keeping these saws sharp and in "fine running order." The "faller" sends forth the call of "TIMBER!" when the tree is about to fall. This is a warning, and in proof of its insistent import he runs from the tree, leaving the saw in the cut instead of amateurishly attempting to carry it with him. (A note that should be heeded by some imaginative writers).

"Buckers" cut the fallen tree in convenient lengths. "Chokermen" put "chokers," or slip nooses of wire, around the cut sections of logs and get them ready for hauling. The "rigging slinger" hitches the choker to the main cable. The "hook-tender" gives his "HI, HI," to the "signal man," who presses an electric control that pulls the whistle on the "yarding donkey," a powerful engine that is usually several hundred feet distant. When he gets the resultant "double whistle" he knows that the engineer in charge of the "yarder" has "opened up" and that he is hauling the log in. The "chaser" unhooks the log when it reaches the spar tree and the "lines" and "chokers" are then pulled back to the woods by means of the "haulback." The logs are loaded on "trucks" or "flat cars" by a "loading donkey" under the direction of the boss "loader" and his crew. As each car is loaded and the mammoth wedges are driven in to hold the logs securely on their long trip down grade, the car is "drifted" from the "landing" or "loading deck" to the "make-up switch," where they are coupled and hauled to the mill, "dump," "rollway" or designated location where they are "scaled" (their footage measured by a competent "scaler," who turns in his report to the town office that they may tally the score sent in from the camps). If the logs are destined for some distant mill they are "piked," "peavied" or "poled" into "rafts" which, by aid of a "tug," are towed to some point on the Sound.

The "drum spool" is the cylinder on which the cable revolves.

The fireman "feeds" or "stokes" the engine with either wood or oil, according to the character of the equipment, while the engineer operates the motive power of the machine. If wood is used as fuel, a woodcutter is assigned to the force.

A "floater" is an undesirable, unstable worker who is prone to "hit the ties," leave camp, upon the least provocation. The "pump man" is the worker in charge of the pump that supplies water to the camp, engines and yards. "Bunkie" is an occupant of the same "bunk house" or "sleeper," while a "side kicker" is a partner or pal. "Cultus" and "skookum" are words they have borrowed from the nomenclature of the Siwash Indians, the former meaning "no good," and the latter a "big strong one." A "pack rat" is he who, like the wood rat, carries loose articles off regardless of their ownership.

A "side winder" is a tree that, hitting another as it falls, "sides around" or "winds" in an opposite direction from that planned, usually causing much grief. "A schoolmarm" is a tree that separates into two distinct growths within a few feet of the ground, thereby complicating matters. A "Y" is a rail switch shaped like a capital "Y", thus facilitating the "shoving in" of "empties" and the egress of loaded cars for the "out haul." A "speeder" is a bicycle mounted on four broad rubber-tired wheels whose wide protective "flanges" makes it especially safe for rapid railroad travel from one camp to another. "Dinkey engines" are those of a smaller, more obsolete type than the powerful ones needed for long hauls, but still useful about camp. "Corduroy roads" are built of railroad ties or logs, laid side by side, to withstand the moving of men or machinery over soft, marshy ground. "Skid roads" are corduroy roads leading to camp workings.

"Tin pants" are cotton trousers soaked in paraffine oil, which, upon drying, hardens and makes the garment rainproof. The "Mackinaw" is the well-known heavy woolen jacket or short outer shirt that, worn outside the trousers, successfully "sheds rain" at the waistline. A "poncho" is the oiled sheet that is used as a rain shield when "riding a speeder" in bad weather. A "slicker" is the well-known thin rubber raincoat much favored by woodsmen. "Slicked up" and "putting on dog" are expressions used when the loggers are dressed in their best and striving to make a good impression. "Windy" signifies that too much conversation is being broadcasted by a boresome fellow, while the stigma of "muled" indicates complete irresponsibility.

Food, Exercise and Authorship

W. Peter Schramm

Those Who Feel That They Have Cause to Complain of Reduced Mental Output Will Here Find Much Food for Thought

AUTHORS are generally looked upon as folks who rank high in erudition, they having an elementary enlightenment of everything in the universe, from dietetics to spiritualism. Yet their knowledge of dietetics and what constitutes the maintenance of the human machine at its best physically and, moreover, mentally, is still too rudimentary for them to realize its values when put to use in their work.

Our primitive ancestors lived in the "brawn age," in which time the principle of "the survival of the fittest" applied especially to the muscles; he who did not possess brawn was soon vanquished by foes who had it. In the present age the law applies chiefly to the brain; the men and women that will survive the maelstrom of mental competition are those that have the best mental faculties.

Modern science has established the fact that the mind and the body cooperate closely in their functioning. Where there is not a virile, healthy body there can not be a virile mentality.

Our bodies being composed of the food that we eat, they can only be as good as is that food. Rightly, modern civilization's denatured victuals, such as white-flour bread, polished rice, and the like, have been condemned by health authorities because of their deficiency in vitamins, iron, phosphorus and other minerals, all of which the human system essentially requires if it is to function at its best. These can be obtained by eating uncooked fruits and vegetables, particularly oranges, figs, dates, apples, prunes, carrots, cabbage, spinach, lettuce, tomatoes, et cetera.

The sedentary worker does not require the quantity of food that the active laborer does; the average human being, especially the mental worker, eats altogether too much. That an empty stomach, or one that is not overloaded with food, is conducive to thinking and general mental clarity is irrefutable. The digesting of food and strenuous thinking both require blood, so they cannot be done simultaneously with the best results. But by an all-wise instinct, the bodily forces know that the food in the

stomach must be taken care of first, so the blood is rushed there, and when the digestive task has been completed, then first is the blood available for mental work; so there you are.

I am an advocate of fasting. Two years ago, while suffering from a slight attack of the "flu," I undertook, as a cure and an experiment, a ten-day fast. The next morning, twenty-one hours after I had last tasted food, I became aware that I had unusually clear mental perception. At the time I had in mind a twenty-thousand-word novelette, but I had a positive reluctance to write it, because of the florid description of scenery and the complicated dramatic conflicts of the characters that its construction entailed; I had postponed its writing from time to time because of a doubt of my ability to do it satisfactorily. It was this yarn that I tackled—on an empty stomach. Working from nine o'clock in the morning until six in the evening, I wrote the first draft of twenty-two thousand words in longhand, without difficulty, without taking food of any kind, save water. The final draft I typed in three days with little or no revision so perfectly had I written the first one, a thing that I am not accustomed to doing. Furthermore, my mentality seemed to become clearer and stronger from day to day, until the tenth day.

On the morning of the tenth day I began a short-story that I had thought out from beginning to end. When I had worked for three hours, the feeling took possession of me that I am prone to experience at the end of a twelve or fifteen-hour stretch of continuous writing—a lassitude that frustrated all efforts at setting down a radiant flow of words. So I quit, lay down, and took a two-hour sleep. Then I tried writing again. My mental power was as clear and perceptive as ever, but it remained with me for only about two and one-half hours; then it "flopped" again; though I had the action of the story clearly in mind, my attempts at setting it down in composition were hopelessly amateurish.

All traces of the "flu" having disappeared on the second day of my fast, and there being no obvious reason for continuing it longer than results warranted, I broke it on the eleventh day by eating oranges. Whether this mental "flop" would have been only temporary, or that it is peculiar to some people only when they go without food, or that I overdid myself the first seven days with the novelette, I can't say; but I believe the last-named reason to be the true one. George Hasler Johnston, who recently started on a foodless hike from Chicago to New York, fasted thirty days and did mental work every day without experiencing any difficulty. At any rate, I surely could work for the first nine days!

That a person can think better when temporarily without nourishment was recently corroborated by an explorer-friend of mine, who was stranded in a Peruvian jungle on the upper reaches of the River Maranon for ten days when his

boat became the victim of the river's treacherous whirlpools. All this time he was without food. In telling me of his experiences, he said:

"During my first few days in the forest my desire for food was quite painful, but nothing could be found, not even berries and nuts, to satisfy my appetite. Then, as I became accustomed to hunger, a vague, drowsy feeling stole over me that was not at all disagreeable. My mind, instead of becoming confused, became clear as crystal, and with no physical exertions to weaken me I could think with precision on the most involved subjects."

I would advise anyone who is skeptical about this to try it before passing judgment, especially if he has a yarn in the mental incubator that does not want to come out, and I'll wager that he will be happily surprised at the tenacious grip that the imagination will take upon the narrative, and the charming flow of words that will come into being. Of course few will want to go to the extreme in the way of a prolonged fast; however, it will be found of great advantage to skip a meal at intervals—that I often do—either breakfast or supper, breakfast preferably. Sleep has the same restorative effect on the system as nutriment, measurably, and with the nervous processes replenished and the mind refreshed, the author will find the hours of the forenoon very conducive to literary production. Too, by this method he will practically cast from him the great American curse of over-eating.

A writer who is already overweight and still persists in gourmandizing, especially when he is not hungry, indulging only to please a desire, may sooner or later not only find himself out of the "price of the meal," but also out of the way of replenishing his funds because of reduced fictional production, in both quantity and quality. An excess of food not only requires blood-power for assimilation that the brain worker needs for creative effort, but it also generates additional poisons, which pass into the blood stream and bring about fatigue. Fatigue evidences poisonous waste in the blood much more than it indicates over-exertion.

The foods that are the most detrimental to the mental worker, when eaten in excess, are those of heavy protein content, such as meat, eggs, cheese, and rich pastries of every variety. Here is where raw fruits and vegetables do the system a good turn. The acids of the fruits neutralize the protein of the meat and the alkali of the pastry starches. A brain through which there flows a blood stream soused with the alkali of sweets and other poisons can not produce the best literary output.

Equally condemnable is the way of the writer who adheres to the health principle of light-eating, but who bolts his food without mastication, like a canine, so that he can get that yarn finished and on its way to the editor in the next mail. In this case he is sure to find that

his digestive apparatus will avenge itself by drafting the power of his circulation and nervous system—the very power that he will urgently need for writing that important phase, the denouement, of his story—and use it to accomplish what Nature designed it for, but which he so inconsiderately tried to divert to another use.

More damning still is the fate of the one who has allowed himself to become a victim of nervous haste, who eternally strives to make one hour do the work of two. A writer of this type is a depleted reservoir of nerve energy before the day is over. Nervous energy it is that enables the human machine to achieve. Without this mysterious fluid we would be as helpless as a locomotive without steam. When the human system is driven at a furious mental pace, this secretion is used prodigiously and wastefully, so that the amount that the system has stored up in a night's rest, to last throughout the day, is often used up in less than five hours.

Then comes mental ennui. But, it being considered too expensive to stop working and lose the rest of the day, the victim drives ahead by sheer will power, thus using up his reserve supply of nervous energy; in other words, it becomes a case of burning the candle at both ends, and shortly comes the rest sanitarium. Furthermore, nervous haste is analogous to stage fright; it confuses and paralyzes the mind.

In passing, it is worth the space to call attention to the benefit derived from a short nap, or an hour of complete relaxation, during the middle of the day, preferably following luncheon. In this time the greater portion of the meal is digested, the mind refreshed, the nerves calmed and replenished with energy.

Of late much stress has been laid by medical science on certain glands in the body—the thyroid gland, for example. When the secretion-flow from this gland is lavish, the body is stimulated to feverish activity, physically and mentally. A lack of this secretion causes the reverse—inertia and lethargy. Undoubtedly there is truth in this assertion. But I am inclined to the belief that if one eats correctly, taking in all the nutrimental essentials that the body requires, and lives a healthy, rational life generally, he need not worry about these glands. Obtaining their natural nutriment, they will not "loaf on the job"—at least not to an extent that will seriously interfere with vocational activities.

The getting of these food elements should not afford a problem, especially not in the summer time, when fruits and vegetables are in season; certainly not if the author resides in the country, where he may raise his own—a pleasant diversion! In the winter, dried fruits will serve the purpose well. Only make sure that some of these are eaten daily.

There is, of course, always danger of becoming a faddist, which is usually likely to result in more harm than good. I make it a habit—in the winter time—to munch a

small ration of dried, uncooked fruits in the middle of the forenoon and afternoon when, after several hours of strenuous creative work, a feeling of slight weariness comes on. For stimulus this is better than lighting a "cig."

Other causes that precipitate fatigue and lower mental efficiency are the wearing of too-tight-fitting garb, overheated rooms, poor ventilation, nasal obstructions that inhibit perfect breathing, faulty elimination, and a slouchy or bent-over sitting position. Undoubtedly it is safe to say that eight out of every ten writers suffer from the last two. Matter retained in the bowels quickly generates and injects poisons into the system that are carried by the blood to the brain, which of course suffers as a consequence. A bent-over posture cramps the abdominal regions and thus checks the normal flow of the blood to the brain. The best way to vanquish this evil is to have a suitable desk—preferably a flat-topped office desk—with a straight-backed stenographer's chair in which one's position is not comfortable unless one sits up straight.

Secondly, we come to exercise. This is as necessary to the sedentary worker as are food and sleep. Vigorous exercise stimulates the circulation so that as it flows faster it carries off the poisons of fatigue and other injurious bodily wastes. It invokes deep breathing, which brings to the blood an increased amount of that vital element, oxygen, which in turn purifies it as it rushes through the lungs and contacts with the air inhaled. Exercise tones up all bodily organs—the heart, liver, kidneys, etc. It is a paradox that when a person feels fatigued and takes a ten or fifteen minute period of exercise, he will not feel so tired following the exertion as he did before going through it. It serves the same purpose as a "shot" in the arm with the needle, except that the former makes for a long, healthy life, and the other for a short one.

Without exercise a correct diet does little good. Then, as already known, assimilated food is first changed into blood that in turn builds muscular tissue. So the blood is the nourishing force of the body. Exercise causes it to flow in an increased quantity to the parts exercised, hence these parts, including the brain, are better nourished. That is the secret of the "strongman's" big muscles and all-around superb physique. With persistent exercise every part of his body is abundantly nourished by the blood. A puny physique does not always evidence disease. Many times it is simply a case of starved muscles that are suffering from malnutrition through insufficient exercise and a sluggish circulation. The same is true of soft, flaccid muscles.

It remains for the writer to choose his—or her—own program as regards the choice of the apparatus, whether it shall be Indian clubs, spring exercisers, a general setting-up routine, gymnastics, or barbells. Personally, I prefer the last-named. I have found barbells

to be the best for general exercise as well as for all-around muscular development, if the user follows instructions as to their manipulation, carefully and persistently. I recommend them for the ladies, too. There are some adjustable ones on the market, the weight of which can readily be adapted to fit one's muscular ability. The writer's exercise must consist of something more than general setting-up calisthenics if one wants a strenuous muscular physique that will make a high-calibered mentality, that in turn will create stories of the same type.

Then there is the inevitable problem of the exercise regime becoming monotonous. That has spelled an early doom to many health culturists. One way to overcome this is to vary the movements. Don't go through the same exercises day after day or evening after evening. Next, develop enthusiasm. Glory in the thought that you have found the way to perpetual good health, which means more and better work, a greater success, a longer life, and a more enjoyable one, with less time, money and suffering lost by illness and doctors' bills. Also let that thought bring an affirmative answer to the ubiquitous question, "Can I spare the time for exercise?"

Law

Ellen Glines

In a whirl of beauty,
Elusive transports,
Joys unapprehended,
Art is conceived:

In sweat and torment
Of blind, unescapable labor,
Racked nerves exploring
Each corner and channel of Pain;
Upon the ultimate
Toppling crest
And ecstasy
Of agony,
Art is born.

From the Brown Owl's Oak

From The Old Writer's Almanack

February 2nd. On this day the Editorial Wejack is reputed to emerge from his burrow, and if he sees his shadow upon the ground, he returns into it and there remains, this being a sign that hard weather will follow for six weeks. Some however say that when he returns to his sleep it is because he has failed to see his shadow, and that thereupon the hard weather ensues. It has often been reported by Writers that they have proved these signs true, and that when the Wejack returned again into his burrow after seeing his shadow, or not, the one way or the other, they found the time thereafter dour and stormy for six weeks or beyond for their Writings. Some lay the blame on Nature and some on the Wejack.

Of climbing after bighorns

"Well, there we were"—it is the guide speaking — "at the foot of that bunch of mountains, with the sheep maybe seven, maybe nine, thousand feet above us. Somewhere up there. Twice we had picked out one or two of them with the glasses the day before. Pretty high levels where they used. Once we got up to their level we'd probably get a shot.

"My three tenderfoots began to ask how soon we could get there. They thought we had ought to make it in three four hours, and I kind o' softened down the news that likely we wouldn't be up to the sheep hights short of afternoon the next day. They didn't believe me. Thought I was stalling, likely, to long out the trip and get more pay.

The give-up

"Time we had raised the footslope and come to the beginning of the real climb, one of 'em was weakening already. He set looking up at what was a-facing us, debating with himself. 'Mean to tell me a man can get to the top of these mountains afoot,' he asks. 'I don't believe it. He'd need a balloon or an airplane. By Jo, boys, I wish we had fetched one, or some scaling ladders'. By the time we were ready to start on he had thought of two three good reasons for turning back. Best thing for everybody.

"Naturally we didn't go straight at the mountainside, but angled.

'Why don't we go straight ahead?' one of the other tenderfoots wanted to know. 'This trail is taking us miles around'. I explained—harder, dangerous, almost impassable, no track, take longer.

The know-it-all

"He was one of these short-cut fellows, hell bent to do it his way. Fired me when I refused to be responsible for his trying it. No choice for the two of us but to leave him and keep on. Heard later that he gave up in a few hours. Nothing else to do.

"He'd have had hard work enough if he had stuck with us. Climbing mountains and trails where the sheep use is a tough job. The tenderfoot was worn out a dozen times, but he was game. It was way along the next day when we came out up where we wanted to be.

"The forenoon after that he got a good shot and bagged a right nice sheep. First class horns. . . . No, they don't always get one. But a man that's game and willing to sweat and not too bullheaded or too much in a hurry to take the time that's necesssary, can get up where the sheep are, and that's his only chance of getting a pair of horns."

The guide's anecdote may contain an allegory for tenderfoots who want to bag literary game.

Parable of the three builders

Each of three men wished to build himself a cabin. One lived in a forest, where timber was abundant; but he had no tools. The second had a chest full of tools, but dwelt in a region of barren sand. The third lived near woods and owned an ax, a saw, and an auger.

How many of the three built his cabin?

The man in the forest but with no tools is the writer who has something to say but no comprehension how to say it. The man with tools in the desert is the one who knows the theory of writing but has no writing-ideas. The man living near the woods and having ax, saw, and auger is the man who has utilizable ideas and enough sense of technique to be able to work them up.

The one who had timber and essential tools was already set to build his cabin. The one who had timber but no tools, could go after tools, and so equip himself to use his timber. But to the one who was marooned in the desert, with no building material and no way to procure any, the full tool-chest was useless.

Tools are necessary to him who would build, but materials are indispensable. Let the would-be writer pitch his mental habitation where timber will be at hand, or at the least plant a woodlot that will grow him a supply of ideas.

The fight in the dark

Some writers are cursed with an excessive fluency; others, almost inarticulate, have to "fight" almost every idea to get it into

words at all, and drag it forth at last in a phrasing stiff, awkward, strained, unwieldy, turgid. One indication of this lack of command over one's ideas and expression is found in a tendency to add modifiers and yet other modifiers, in the attempt to bring the phrasing to somewhat of the exactness that the writer feels it to lack.

He may—but the chances are that he will not—succeed in patching together thus the particulars essential to logical completeness of the idea; but in either event, the expression itself remains unsatisfactory. A skilled editor can usually transform such inexpert expressions quickly into phrasings that are simpler, clearer, more direct, and probably more compact, just as a grown-up can easily put into words for the child the thought that the child is struggling vainly to bring out of the haziness of his mind to clear conception and expression.

When one examines in its original form the sentence thus edited, he is likely to find the reason for its awkwardness, turgidity, and ineffectiveness. It represents, not the idea or thought worked out to clearness and completeness, but only the process of the writer's mind as it is working toward the idea or thought. It reveals the struggle after clearness and completeness of conception, but not the clear and complete conception itself. Hence it is entitled to no place in the copy. What belongs in the copy is the idea in final form —the conception worked out to definiteness and completeness and therefore susceptible of definite, clear, exact, and final wording.

One must needs work out his ideas to clearness, and at times he may have to work them into definiteness and clearness as he goes along. But he is under no compulsion to put them into his copy in the merely preliminary, experimental phrasings he used in struggling toward clarity of mind about them. Indeed, before he has fitted them with the final phrasing that they require, he has not brought them to clarity in his own mind.

Watching the tail-light fade out

A writer chanced the other day to relate the following:

"He wrote me that if I knew any promising young writers who might supply him any of the articles, he wished I would tell him. I thought of L—— at once. It is her kind of subject. She is situated so that she could get the material for several articles with very little trouble, and she says she wants a chance, so I recommended her strongly. Then I mentioned G—— as a possibility. She can't write so well, and the subject isn't much in her way, but in a pinch he might care to try her. Well, he told me lately that L—— did not so much as answer his letter, but that G—— sent him a satisfactory article and he would call on her again."

The late Charles W. Eliot was fond of the saying, "The readiness is all."

Some flashed lights on interview copy

How to present material procured by interviewing seems frequently to puzzle the tyro. There is of course no invariable rule. The character and purpose of the story, the circumstances attending its publication, and the nature of the material itself, determine the presentation.

Sometimes information procured by interviewing does not call for presentation as interview material. Most of the news in the daily paper is procured by questioning those who know the facts —i.e., by interviewing—yet as concerns a large proportion of this news, the reader does not care from whom it came, but only that it be dependable. It is enough for him that "Fire today destroyed the noted Jones Library. The estimated loss is $150,000. Numerous unique books and manuscripts were burned," or that "Sales have been increased ten per cent by the independent grocers of Dellton through a system of co-operative advertising."

In some circumstances, however, the source of the information or the name of the person providing it or making the remarks reported, is part of the news, adds to its significance, or indicates its dependability; then the reader wants the source or the name mentioned. Now and then, too, he is better pleased to have the words of the person reported—to have him "quoted." Of course when the interview *is* the news or the story, he wants not only the name but a large proportion of quotation.

Common sense and experience must teach the interviewer when the story and the circumstances call for the name or the sources of information, for brief direct "quotes," or for extended quotation.

Wordings that accurately and fairly convey the person's essential meaning are ordinarily accepted as satisfactory quotation; but sometimes the exact language he uses had better be given. Here too the judgment developed through experience is a better guide than any set of instructions can be. How else, for instance, can the reporter recognize when the exact words will be more impressive than any paraphrase, or that probably only a word-for-word quotation of a ticklish passage or a slippery interviewee may forestall a charge of garbling or of falsifying?

'Twould do 'em good to treat 'em rough

There is a body of theory about how to swim, but nobody ever became an expert or any other kind of swimmer without getting into the water and swimming. The fellow who keeps on doing that is going presently to find himself able to stay on top and swim, and though his best be only dog-paddling, that is better than nine out of ten of those could do who know all the swimming theory that there is but never get wet all

over except in the rain or a bathtub.

Probably there are such persons. Certainly the like of them are to be found among those who profess an interest in writing—"writers" who don't jump in and write, however much they may know, and know well, about the theory of writing. Why some of these don't write is of course understandable enough. They have the analytical and critical type of mind, and not primarily the active writing impulse. Not to write, but to know about writing, is their motivating instinct.

But there are others. They could write. Their instinct (if once set free) would be to write. They feel more or less a desire to write. Yet they don't write; something holds them back.

Often the deterrent is merely a "psychological inhibition." If we bestowed names as the Indians used to, we should call such persons Man-Buffaloed-Through-Awe-of-Technique and Woman-Afraid-She-Won't-Get-It-Right - by - Rule. Instead of being impressed duly with the value of technique, they have become impressed unduly with its supposed difficulties. They are obsessed with a sense of it as something mystifying, occult, remote, only mysteriously attainable, awesome; and when their writing-instinct stirs, their half-unrecognized apprehension of being unable to apply this body of recondite principles and practice paralyzes their will to write. In truth, what ails them is, that they are afraid to jump in and write, and thereby learn to write.

Unfortunately, no one can sneak up behind these doubt-inhibited unfortunates and fling them suddenly into the stream, so that they shall have to swim whether they have any technique or not. A good many hundred thousands of boys have lost their natatorial inhibitions and gained a working-technique in aquatics as the result of similar treatment.

Writings that are people-ized

"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder"; "The dish is good that pleases the eater"; "If you would hear a Chinese sing, make the fiddle squeak."

The editor whose policy is "Give 'em what they want" is merely making application of a certain practical wisdom condensed into numerous proverbial sayings out of centuries of observation of human nature. Find an editor high or low, honest or dishonest, who doesn't do it, and you will find a publication that either is shifting its circulation from one class to another or is soon going to have "Gone Out of Business" posted on the door. And the editor who is shifting his circulation is striving to give the old readers enough of what they want to hold them while he offers the new class of readers what they want in order to catch them.

If writers' writings are to appeal to people they must be people-ized. Art for art's sake is a high

ideal, but the ideal of art for art's and people's sake takes into account the party of the second part. "I ain't going to pay anybody to read the book," Josiah told Samantha Allen when she announced her biblical intentions.

There are people, and people, and people. The dish that one boarder prefers is not the dish that all the boarders prefer. The Atlantic's people are not Liberty's people; The Nation's people are not The Rotarian's people; the New York Times's people are not the New York American's people. But they are all people, and what any of them read is people-ized for them through having the manner and point of view and spirit of their kind of people.

To gain recognition the writer must either find the kind of readers for whom his work is spontaneously people-ized through its own natural impulse and character, or he must with definite intent and method people-ize what he writes so that it shall fit the preferences of this or that kind of people.

Each course has led to success; either and both may fail. The most fortunate adventurers in writing are those who—in addition really to having an ability in writing of one kind or another—are much the same kind of people as the people for whom they write. Their work people-izes itself naturally for their public; the reader instinctively recognizes the writer as "my sort."

Waiting for the dusk to thicken

Pete Peters says, "Some newspaper men are born writers an' some writers are born newspaper men. "Takes a good yarn to fill up a hole in an evenin' or a sock satisfact'ry. "Ain't nothin' against Albert Bushnell Hart, s' far 's I know, but rec'lectin' who Rupert Hughes is, is quite some less strain on the mem'ry."

This being February, it is well to recall that the worst has not been said of Washington. His published writings fill a dozen or so volumes, but no one has yet called him the Father of his Country's Literature.

"One of the leaders labeled the 3000 young people attending the conference as 'tired radicals'. They have rejected the standards of the older generation, but they have discovered that the standards of their own generation often fail to satisfy."—News report. The days of the extreme vogue of stories of flaming youth are numbered, and there will presently be more opportunity for fiction of a different trend. What will its type be, and who will write it? The Owl is going out to see if there are any tired conservatives who look as if they are struggling to keep from breaking out with a story. Or don't conservatives ever break out?

The Best Things from PRINTLAND

About Listening

Listening has been written about as a fine art. It is not only a fine art—it is an extremely useful art. Why? For two reasons, at least: If we listen, we learn, for other people besides ourselves do have good ideas. I know a number of such people. Moreover, if we are good listeners, we make other people happy. Indeed, one of the best ways to be a popular host or hostess is to ask intelligent questions, and let your guests do the talking. We all like to talk when the occasion is right; on the whole, we would rather talk ourselves than listen to the other man; and so if I wish to be pleasing to other people, I should do at least a fair share of the listening. How can we develop the art of pleasant and gracious listening?

I shall give you my ideas of the method by asking you six questions upon which you may grade yourselves. If you are about on an average with your friends, grade yourself *C;* if you are above average, grade yourself *A* or *B;* and if below average, judge yourself *D* or *E.* Then, when you have graded yourself, ask a friend to do the same for you, independently, and compare your grades with those he gave you. This comparison of grades is, I am told by my readers, both instructive and illuminating.

Now let us proceed with the questions concerning the development of the ability to listen:

(1) When you talk with a person, do you try to absorb what he is saying, or are you eagerly waiting till he has finished so that you can say what is on your mind?

I have a friend who is a very interesting conversationalist. He talks cleverly and brightly, and I suspect that he knows it. And I am confident that although he watches me intently while I talk and nods his head vigorously to make me think he is listening, he does not hear a word that I say. He just seems to. What he is doing is waiting courteously until I finish, so that he can make his bright remark. But some of my acquaintances do not even wait with patience until I have come to a comma or a semi-colon; they break in anywhere when they have ar-

rived nearly at the bursting point. Can you listen, or is your mind full of what you want to say? What is your grade, before we pass on to the second question?

(2) Do you ever sit relaxed and encourage someone else to talk by asking him intelligent questions, and actually get fun out of the experience? When a pause comes in the conversation, have you ever found out that it is better to ask a good question than to start to give your own ideas? How do you grade yourself on the art of getting your friends to talk by asking them intelligent questions?

(3) When you meet strangers, do you like to discover their interests by asking them questions, or is your plan of entertainment to tell them all about yourself? Most steady talkers know very little about the casual acquaintances they meet, because they are too happy in telling about themselves. They miss the deep pleasure that comes from learning to know other interesting people, and from hearing about new and fascinating things which the man who listens well frequently discovers. Almost every man is interesting when you draw him out. And so, I ask, do you prefer to draw strangers out or to talk your own line?

(4) Do you consciously try to talk to people about what will interest them or do you talk about the same thing to everybody? We cannot talk to people about what interests them until we listen to find out what their interests are. I know many people who talk only about what interests them. They talk about their sons to a bachelor; about their cars to a man whose only acquaintance with cars comes from jumping out of their way; and about their fishing trips to friends who think that fishing is the zero pastime. No one can be excused for making such a mistake as this, except the young mother who talks constantly about her babies. What is your grade on this point?

(5) Will you allow me to ask you to answer this next question searchingly and frankly? Do you really enjoy the pastime of finding out what other people are like inside, or are you really at heart indifferent about them? Does your chief joy come from your own plans and ideas? The poor listener walks among people and never knows them. He is too busy with himself. He looks at people and sees their faces; he hears their words; he pays no attention. He is as much alone as Robinson Crusoe was on his island, even though he is surrounded by thousands of people. Though he rubs elbows with them, he does not know them, and he does not know them because he is not interested in them. He is interested only in his own affairs. Such a man is surprised when people become irritated with him. If he were a good listener, he would know beforehand what would hurt them and he would not say it unnecessarily. Are you really interested in knowing other people, or only in yourself? What is your grade?

(6) Finally, when you are in an argument, do you defend your own

ideas through thick and thin, or are you quick to see where your opponent has a good point in his argument, and accordingly modify yours? When you argue, do you want to carry your point, or are you bright enough to take up a good point from your opponent?

Any man who does not modify his opinion somewhat in an argument, is too wise to be true; or is very dull; or is a poor listener who is afraid to acknowledge that he could be wrong.

Then, in conclusion, when you argue, do you try to get at the truth, or are you afraid to change your mind? What is your grade?

Six questions have been asked and these become six suggestions for becoming a good listener. They are:

1. When you talk to a friend, hear what he is saying with your mind.

2. Make the other fellow talk by asking him intelligent questions.

3. When you meet strangers, find out their interests by getting them to talk.

4. Find out what other people like to talk about, and talk about that.

5. Forget yourself and become interested in other people. People are more interesting than anything else in the world.

6. When you argue, try to get at the truth and be glad to acknowledge that your friend has given you a new idea.

Try these suggestions and see how popular you will become. — W. W. CHARTERS in *American Mutual Magazine.*

Slogans

An English professor of University College, Nottingham, discussing in The Observer the etymology and use of the word "slogan," confesses to a vague impression that the current use of this word "for a catchword sufficiently stentorian to drown argument or criticism," is of American origin. He adds: "Most contemporary English is." Whether this was meant in praise or dispraise, one might be in doubt, if it were not that he has taken so much pains to find a reputable English etymological ancestry for the word.

It was, as a matter of fact, imported into England by no less an authority than Macaulay, from Scotland, where it had been used by Sir Walter Scott with a meaning to which it had descended through a Lowland corruption of its original Gaelic significance. Up in the Highlands the *sluaghghairm* was merely the name of the clan chief shouted as a battle-cry, a "host-yell." Across the border these proud, breathful Highland names were shouted, to be answered by the Southrons in imitation but with words that had no such flavor. The couplet into which Scott caught the softened, demeaned [bemeaned?] generic word for what had ceased to ring over this debatable ground was:

> To heaven the Border slogan rang,
> St. Mary for the young Buccleuch.

And it was from this couplet, it is surmised, that Macaulay borrowed it for approved use in English literature. One of our early

American dictionaries, however, disdaining such origin, independently traced it to a euphonious pronunciation of "slug-home."

As Professor Weekley tells us, the coal-strike die-hard slogan, for example, if properly used would be, instead of "Not a penny off the pay," etc., simply "A Cook," after the manner of the Highlanders shouting for a Mackenzie or a MacNeil. Even die-hards seem not to be willing to starve for such a personal slogan.

After all, isn't the American definition of the "vogue-word" the loftier, lifted as it is from the personal and clannish into the realm of principle? Yet slogans are dangerous at best. They often turn out to be lies in their generalities and more often intoxicate by their rhetoric. Sometimes they are the weapon of the conscienceless, intellectual, or political slugger, which doubtless accounts for the early American imputation of a brutal origin. How unfair slogans frequently are may best be pondered the morning after a political campaign is over. — *New York Times.*

Jack London and 547,500 Words

Jack London once told how he made copy.

"There is an incubation period of weeks or months and then I take my typewriter between my knees and sally into it. I tear up a dozen introductory paragraphs. I write the first chapter over and over again.

"I know no formula for such work. Every page is a novel experience. I love the job, but oh, God, it is hard work! I suffer a thousand births and deaths before I get a story into shape for the publisher.

"But there is one rule that I rigidly observe. Nothing must interfere. I write 1,500 words a day. I may do more, but never less. When I say 'a day' I mean every day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Most of the stuff will not pass, and I tear it up and write again. I can do 1,500 words of fiction every day because I am a reporter."

This is a valuable tip, especially for dreamy souls who are always about to start, but never put a foot forward and keep walking. A man who writes 1,500 words every day has an annual product of 547,500 words, offering ample surplus for the waste basket if the object is to produce a novel a year, a newspaper column, a Sunday feature, or sufficient article material to assure a first-class livelihood. Starvation is no longer the synonym for authorship in this country.—MARLEN PEW, in *Editor & Publisher.*

American Quarterlies

The North American Review, long a recognized leader of that small group of serious thinkers, the quarterly reviews, has been sold by its editor, Col. George Harvey, to Walter Butler Mahony, brother-in-law of Nicholas Murray Butler, and, to quote Colonel Harvey, one "admirably equipped to maintain its splendid tradition."

Colonel Harvey became editor in 1899, and throughout his career as a diplomat and maker of Presidents he has maintained its leadership in political and literary fields, gathering distinguished names and significant articles in each issue. In a recent number, the editor looks at Europe, the Hon. J. M. Kenworthy comments on Britain's industrial situation, the Rev. William Adams Brown discusses the development of contemporary religion, Ernest Ludwig, former Consul-General of Austria-Hungary and Hungary, takes up the case of Hungary's war guilt, and Cornelia James Cannon deplores the inability of Americans to use "the new leisure" and urges hobbies upon them. In addition there are several other essays, biographical articles, poems, and twenty pages of book reviews by well-known critics.

Of equal rank and even more literary merit is the Yale Review. Its connection with the University whose name it bears is confined to sharing its editor, Dean Wilbur Cross, with the Yale Graduate School, and being published by the Yale University Press. In the fields of politics, religion, social studies, literature, and criticism it has established a reputation for being careful, scholarly, and thorough.

Political Science Quarterly, published by the Academy of Political Science of Columbia University, The Quarterly Journal of Economics, published by the Harvard University Press, often containing matter of general interest, The International Review of Ethics, published by the University of Chicago, and here again the standard review in the field, and The Musical Quarterly, published by the Schirmer Music Publishing Company, which gathers many noted authorities on musical matters in the table of contents.

The American Historical Review heads the list of periodicals devoted exclusively to history and including more than fifty journals, most of which are issued quarterly, distributed throughout the country. The October issue contains articles by Willard Sperry on contemporary religion, Virginia Woolf on reading, Don Marquis on men who make newspapers, Stark Young on realism in the theatre, Wilbur C. Abbott, Harvard authority, on democracy versus dictatorship. In addition, Frederick Luquiens contributes a charming "Jeremiad of a Modern Language Teacher" and Joseph Warren Beach finds fault with American literature.

The University of Virginia has given its name to the excellent Virginia Quarterly, also national in scope, although reflecting the thought of the "new South" described by Edwin Mims in the April number and by Sara Haardt in the quarterly itself. James Southall Wilson has edited it during its two years of life. In addition to Miss Haardt's article, features of a recent issue are articles by Henry Pratt Fairchild, Raymond Tucker, and Dostoievsky's Letters.

Among more specialized reviews

is numbered Foreign Affairs, which appears under the patronage of the Council on Foreign Relations, New York, and is edited by Archibald Gary Coolidge and Hamilton Fish Armstrong. The authoritative quality of its contributions make it a valuable aid to those interested in world affairs.

A quarterly almost exclusively devoted to problems of the South, with a few general articles in each issue is the twenty-five year-old South Atlantic Quarterly, edited by William K. Boyd and William Wannamaker at Durham, South Carolina. Somewhat similar is the Sewanee Review, published at the University of the South, Sewanee, Tenn., with articles almost exclusively literary, however.

Among the most important and broadest of the distinctly specialized quarterly reviews is Social Forces, a publication of the University of North Carolina Press which is conceded to have surpassed even the scholarly American Journal of Sociology of the University of Chicago. An interesting feature appearing in the last few issues are biographical sketches of such men as Herbert Adams and W. A. Dunn. Many of these magazines are published under the auspices of State historical societies, receiving in several instances financial aid directly from the State government, others appear under private auspices, and still others are maintained by semi-public organizations. Several of these historical reviews have a distinctive scholarly quality, and almost all are creditable to the localities and institutions from which they are issued.

There are quarterlies for the fields of science, art and education, largely technical; among the most interesting is the Progressive Education Quarterly of the Progressive Education Society of Washington, D. C., edited by Gertrude Hartman, and only three years of age.—*The American Review of Reviews.*

A Newspaper Morgue

"Morgue" is the newspaper term applied to that department wherein photographs for later use are stored. Obituaries of prominent people are written up in advance, and held in the editorial department; photographs to be used with the obituaries are kept in the morgue—which explains the origin of the term.

How a morgue is conducted is fully explained by Maurice Symonds, the librarian for the New York Daily News. It will be seen that this picture paper keeps many kinds of photographs other than those of people, and a continuous problem consists in properly disposing of the "deadwood".

If we were to compare a newspaper photographic department, we would have to take a thriving business to get a parallel. A newspaper picture department is built on similar lines to that of any other kind of industry. You will find large newspapers, depending upon a subsidiary to keep them well supplied with their special needs. On the Daily News, we have the Pa-

cific and Atlantic Photos, Inc., who supply us with pictures of events that occur throughout the world. In every remote corner of the universe the eyes of the camera are on the job, and these occurrences appear in the Daily News. Other newspapers have their special services, like the Wide World for the N. Y. Times and International for the Hearst papers.

In the course of a week, photographs coming to us through this channel, used and unused, number approximately 500.

But much depends upon our own staff of photographers for things locally.

Over fifty assignments are covered each day, and several shots are taken of each subject covered.

Photographs used and unused, from this source number 1,000 a week.

Publicity seekers, the mails, the stage and film world help build our department. Our city editor constantly sends in photographs of criminals, missing persons, etc. Editors from the various departments send in batches of photographs to be filed for future use.

Counting all in all, and from every angle, our weekly total amounts to 2,000 photographs.

All pictures that are filed are rubber stamped with the name of the newspaper on the back and the date when filed. Syndicate pictures usually have a lengthy caption with a date line. These captions, however, we neatly paste on the back of pictures. This is necessary, because if the subject has five names, we would cross-file five ways. If this caption is torn off, we would find it quite difficult to identify who's who.

Frequently a photo has only a name, without further explanation. We make every effort to get details before filing. Unless it is of President Coolidge, or somebody known, we find such photos filed without any identification annoying and sometimes dangerous. We do considerable cross-filing. All group photos are cross-filed. If we have a photo of three sisters, we make three individual folders. The name under which person is filed, is circulated, or stamped File Under. Whenever photo is used in paper, the complete caption from paper is pasted on back of photo and dated. If it is a short story, we paste complete story on back of photo. This method enables us to give date when used, and the caption gives the facts surrounding the picture or photo.

Our reporters frequently find the data on back of photo helpful in writing their articles, and it holds down our clipping requests to a minimum.

We do not file all pictures that come to the Library. Sometimes 20 to 30 per cent are reduced each week. Of course it is in knowing what not to file that keeps the file from sudden growth. For instance, syndicate pictures cover a wide area, yet many of these pictures are only "a one-day story". Tomorrow the scene or personality loses its importance. Then the "to save or not to save" question comes up, and the librarian must make final decision.

Photos taken by staff photographers are also treated the same way. We do, however, save all pictures that have appeared in our paper but not all are filed. What is used and not filed we put in a special section known as the "Pickle." These pickle pictures are placed in large envelopes, and put up in monthly batches and held indefinitely. Occasionally we do get calls for pictures which are in the pickle, and these are easily located.

We also have a section for unused pictures, which are held and treated the same way. In other words, nothing is discarded. We simply keep out of our permanent files such material we think not suitable, thereby holding down expenditure for file equipment.

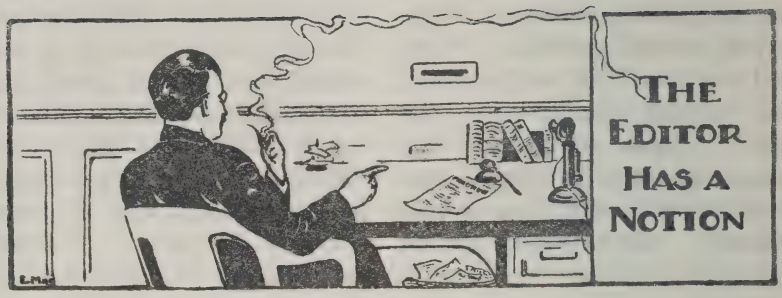
Because we have an extensive picture collection, nearly one million, we have attempted to establish a method to simplify our filing system to enable us to get material without unnecessary delay. To accomplish this, our files are strictly alphabetical, based on the encyclopaedic order. Pictures of Coney Island, London, Woolworth building, etc. are all filed under their specific headings.

Whenever we find grouping essential, we break away from set rules and file accordingly. For instance we find that Race Horses would be more convenient to locate by having them filed under Race Horse as a heading, and the name of the horse in alphabetical order. All animal pictures are filed together such as Animals (Cats)—Animals (Dogs). Royal families are filed under countries, and each royal person gets a separate folder.

Our Mc and Macs are merged. To avoid saying no to a request when there should be a yes, our Brown-Browne, Clark-Clarke, Johnson and Johnston, and all similar catches in proper names are filed together. Hundreds of names in the files are alike. We have 20 John Browns, 30 James Smiths, etc. throughout the file. These folders are properly marked with their titles, but we put on a warning with a rubber stamp "Watch Next Folder."

On persons deceased, folder and contents are indicated in large type "Dead" and date of death on flap. Practically any librarian could go on indefinitely describing the whys and wherefores of his library. Let us suffice in my saying that the only way to keep a good working picture file is to guard it, keep in touch with it daily, transfer marriages, watch deaths. Insert only photos which have immediate or future use.

Constant insertion means in a span of three to five years more file cabinets. Touch up files here and there. General weeding or discarding should not be considered until picture files are more than ten years in use. After that time the experienced librarian could easily dispose of considerable material that has crept in day by day, having no more value than occupying good file space.—*The Fourth Estate.*



A matter of ever-blooming interest for all who respond happily to the allure of rhythm and dignity in word-collocation is the question of what is style. The Editor has a notion that on this as on countless other subjects men will always disagree. Perhaps after all style is to be sensed instead of understood by analysis; apprehended, rather than comprehended. However this may be, certain it is that the avid gourme of literature finds a pure delight when he savors a passage like this one from Galsworthy's "Told by the Schoolmaster", in the December Forum.

We all remember still, I suppose, the singular beauty of the summer when the war broke out. I was then schoolmaster in a village on the Thames. Nearly fifty, with a game shoulder and extremely deficient sight, there was no question of my fitness for military service; and this, as with many other sensitive people, induced in me, I suppose, a mood abnormally receptive. The perfect weather, that glowing countryside, with corn harvest just beginning, and the apples already ripening, the quiet nights trembling with moonlight and shadow, and, in it all, this great horror launched and growing, the weazening of Europe deliberately undertaken, the death-warrant of millions of young men signed. Such summer loveliness walking hand in hand with murder thus magnified beyond conception was too piercingly ironical.

One of those evenings toward the end of August, when the news of Mons was coming through, I left my house at the end of the village street, and walked up towards the Downs. I have never known anything more entrancing than the beauty of that night. All was still, and colored like the bloom of dark grapes, so warm, so tremulous. A rush of stars was yielding to the moon fast riding up, and from the corn-stooks of that early harvest the shadows were stealing out. We had no daylight saving then, and it was perhaps half-past nine when I passed two of my former scholars, a boy and a girl, standing silently at the edge of an old gravel pit, opposite a beech clump. They looked up and gave me good evening. Passing on over the crest, I could see the unhedged fields to either hand; the corn stooked and the corn standing, just gilded under the moon; the swelling Downs of a blue-gray; and the beech clump I had passed, dark-cut against the brightening sky. The moon itself was almost golden, as if it would be warm to the touch, and from it came a rain of glamour over sky and fields, woods, downs, farmhouses, and the river down below. All seemed in a conspiracy of unreality to one obsessed, like me, by visions of the stark and trampling carnage going on out there.

What have we here? Style, no less—distinguished and yet modestly confident. What flow, and consequent ease! There is contrast, too, and a certain competence of phrasing that causes us to feel that here speaks one whose words are

not haply put together but are the issue of a fine spirit, like calm waters from a shady spring.

There is something more, too; but how is it to be expressed? We somehow sense that here are impressions, thoughts, that come to us not as photographs of what the author has seen, heard and felt, but a fresh, authoritative mintage of metal mined by Galsworthy himself—and issued with his own image and superscription indelibly yet not obtrusively stamped upon every golden coin. In some sort, this is Style.

Whenever the Editor reads the creator of The Forsytes he feels a sort of weepy nostalgia for the unhurried methods of the best older writers. But to wish that they might again come into the saddle and, lances couched, drive out all the present-day horde of chapped cowboys and lip-sticked flappers and nicotine-stained detectives would be to pray for the clock to be turned back, and that can never be. However, the Editor has made solemn resolution—this being all but New Year's day—to reread "The Cloister and the Hearth", "Romola", "The Newcomes", "A Tale of Two Cities", "Catherine de Medici", "Ravenshoe", "The Scarlet Letter", "A Modern Instance", and—but he would better pull the curb on his charger, lest it gallop him away from his job!

The very fact that John Galsworthy, Edith Wharton, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, and a few others at home and abroad, are more concerned with sincere story-telling than with posturing so as to win the smiles of the Great God Mazuma is cheering when, in such a mood as this, one laments "The Commercialization of Literature."

Just now the Sun came out—not the newspaper, but the real reservoir of optimism—and the Editor has a notion that after all the child may have nothing more serious than the measles.

All the same, a solid course of reading in the old-timers should not be a bad prescription—if we can leave off boot-leg stuff long enough to take it.

Here comes an A. P. dispatch from England saying that Captain Harry Graham is making a collection of the world's 50 worst books. He has, it seems, chosen 32 so far, and has had them all bound alike. The members of the Authors' League of America are respectfully requested to send in nominations from their own most admired works. The only discouraging thing about this announcement is that the Captain is said by the A. P. (no, Sybilla, not the A. & P.) to be a "humorist and playwright." How seriously must we take his final choice? And is the uniform color of binding to be yellow or purple?

Speaking of collections, have you noticed that there is a veritable epidemic of "Best Short-Stories" collections this season? They are of any desired sort, too—American, British, College, World's and others *ad lib.* Several have value, but

most of them reflect one man's opinion, in each volume, and that is as it is—no more, no less.

The other night the Editor was looking at the photoplay spectacle, "Ben Hur." In the tier of seats behind him sat a father, a mother and an inquiring young son—unbelievably fertile, too, in his ability to propound posers. At length:

"Daddy, is there a book called 'Ben Hur'?"

"Yes."

"And a play?"

"Yes."

"I'd rather see the play."

"You would!" said the father, on a pessimistic note.

"Why?"

"Because you are seeing the movie."

Perhaps that boy is destined to become a dramatic critic.

The Editor—in common, he has a notion, with everyone else who is not doing his present-day living in 1877—enjoys reading brilliantly written advertising. Some of the best brains of the period are mixed with ink, to produce advertisements, and some of the feeblest brains too! Here is a quotation containing a quotation, from a book circular announcing "Plot and Idea Psychology," by Benjamin Christopher Leeming.

"The Climax! What puts the kick, the punch, the thrill, the pathos, or the satisfactory solution there? Not guess—not luck—except once in a hundred times. It is in accordance with the laws of ideation, the reasons for which were pointed out hundreds of years ago by Francis Bacon—the father of what is called Modern Science. Science and art are twins.

"That English master of the short-story, Stacy Aumonier, said: 'The day has passed when the artist sneers at the scientist or the scientist looks down upon the artist as a producer of sentimental twaddle. They have made up an old feud which in any case was always illusory. The artist realizes that science helps him to have a more logical grasp of technique and accomplishment—in other words, to know what he is doing.'"

This doesn't sound like a publisher's blurb—it was probably written by Mr. Leeming himself. And if it was, it's dollars to thumbtacks that he has written an interesting book.

It will be a jolt to some writers of fiction, drama and poetry who are long on inspiration and short on reasoning to read that science can help the artist to know what he is doing. "Why should he do aught else than follow his mood, wheresoever it leads?" inquires the inspirationalist. Why should he, indeed, if he is writing for himself alone?

The Word Page

An interesting adherence to an original (Latin) meaning is found in the name Punta Arenas, which is said to be the world's southernmost city. Literally, this interesting settlement on the Strait of Magellan, Chile, means "Sandy Point." The reading public easily takes meanings for granted, hence few are likely to remember, if they ever knew, that even now in English, *arena* means, primarily, "sand, a sandy place." It takes its meaning from the Roman custom of selecting a sandy spot as a location for their games, and—later—uniformly spread their amphitheatres with sand, so as to lay the dust raised by grinding chariot wheels, as well as to absorb the blood of gladiators and beasts alike.

Another Latin origin is interestingly illustrated in the filmed version of "Ben Hur", now being shown in the larger cities. In several of the scenes showing the interior of the great trireme galley in which Ben Hur has been condemned to row, we see a huge brute of a man, of relentless mien, seated before a table or block, wielding in each hand a mallet. As these mallet-strokes fall with clock-like precision, one hand after the other, the wretched galley slaves bend to the long sweeps, thus timing their oar-strokes to the blows of the hortator's mallets.

As the speed of the galley is to be increased, the hortator's strokes become more rapid, and thus he *incites to action.* A more gentle statement—"to encourage, to urge strongly"—is likewise found in the dictionaries, so that hortatory methods may be either violent or pursuasive, as the case may be. At all events, our words *exhort, exhortation, hortation, hortative, hortatory,* all are linked with the urge-idea so dramatically illustrated in the Roman galleys. That task-masters with scorpions (whips with bits of metal on the lash-ends) walked constantly between the rows of flagging rowers to "exhort" them to keep pace with the rhythm of the hortator's strokes, only added to the effectiveness of that worthy's "exhortations."

Naturally, not all hortators were brutal, for sometimes young Roman sportsmen, or respected serving men, manned the smaller galleys used for pleasure or racing purposes, so that the same hortatory methods employed by the coxswain of a modern racing eight-oared shell are likewise an inheritance from his Latin ancestor.

The reserving of rights plays a very important part in the shaping of your future and one should realize this at an early stage.

Recently I have been fortunate in placing some of my published work in England. Perhaps many of the readers of The Writer's Monthly are familiar with some of the little English papers that appear once a week, many of which circulate in the rural districts of England and Scotland—those papers that take stories with a homey setting but with plenty of suspense and surprise to hold the reader's interest.

Red Letter, D. C. Thomson and Co., Ltd., 12 Fetter Lane, Fleet St., E. C. 4 London, is just such a paper with a very courteous editor, who pays promptly and well for stories that have been published in Canada (or United States), or for other material that one cares to submit. All serial rights are bought, but when one receives £5 5 shillings for a story published in Canada, selling all serial rights does not seem out of the way.

One must be very careful of the rights he sells; also to say so candidly when reselling the rights he has reserved, for many publications buy all rights and will purchase under no other circumstances.

I have reserved second serial rights to most of my children's stories and poems, some of which I am sending overseas and others reserving for book publication.

For the writer of verse the trade publication field may prove profitable. By studying the wants of each editor, many little poems of a light nature can be placed. These must have in many cases an advertising slant, for instance, in The Edison Monthly, New York, verse pertaining to their Electric Lamps (bulbs) might find acceptance. Refrigeration, Atlanta, Ga., paid me for a little verse called "The Song of The Refrigerator." Though this publication does not remunerate the author to the extent that the Edison Monthly does, it adds to one's list of verse markets.

Editorial writers might be fortunate in winning one of the prizes in the Open Range Page

of the Denver Post if they write upon up-to-date subjects in a chatty manner. One I had published was called "So's Your Old Manuscript!" which appeared under another title, namely "Jazz Language Drowns English."—J. M.

Walter N. Emerson has resigned his position as Managing Editor of National Grocer and The General Merchant. The editorial work of the papers will be handled by O. F. Byxbee, the publisher. This is a good firm to deal with if one has material that fits their needs. The address is Byxbee Publishing Company, Continental and Commercial Bank Bldg., Chicago.

Mr. Emerson will devote his time to the buying and selling of postage stamps for collectors.—E. J. B.

Having received a valuable tip from reading Experience Meeting several months ago, I wish to pass on some information that may be of interest to other writers.

The writer holds down a regular job in the Medical Department of an insurance company, but finds, or makes time to keep his hand in the writing game. For several months, he has represented the Universal Trade Press Syndicate of New York. They send you each month a regular list of their wants, and if you deliver the goods, they send special assignments. Out of the first four articles submitted, two were accepted, published and paid for within thirty days or so; one was rewritten and then accepted, and the fourth did not quite make the grade. Here's a tip—it lacked the proper photograph!

The writer has also made the grade a couple of times with America's Humor, Chicago, and found them to be reliable.—F.B.B.

The Church School Journal, published by Methodist Book Concern, Cincinnati, wishes good photographs of church-school activities for possible reproduction. These should not be pictures of groups, but activities showing pupils of church schools, vacation schools, or week-day schools of religion engaged in worship, social service projects, recreation, children's features of religious education, in city and rural communities. Prints should be in black and white, glossy surface, and preferably not less than 5x7 inches in size. Good kodak prints should be accompanied by negatives. Captions should be attached but not written on the prints. Pictures will be returned if desired.

Joe White, editor of American Paint Journal, American Paint and Oil Dealer, and American Painter and Decorator, 3713 Washington Ave., St. Louis, Mo., writes of these periodicals, "It is generally against our plan of publication to use descriptive matter without giving names, locations, and dates. We find that when we do this our subscribers are sometimes inclined to question them. In such cases we want the facts and when possible a photograph. I have a great deal of copy on hand at this time, but if you run across

something original, I shall be glad to have it. I will allow $1.50 for the use of photographs."

For anyone who enjoys writing short informational articles about historical incidents, relics, curiosities, and such, the reports of the National Museum at Washington, D. C., provides unlimited suggestions. These may be secured free of charge through congressmen. —R. P.

I have been much interested in the articles about the relation between food and writing, which have appeared in THE WRITER'S MONTHLY. I feel that I must tell you what I have found, by experience, does me the most good. When I have a story to write I can write it better if I have had scarcely anything to eat. Above all, I must not have had too much protein, or I cannot write inventively at all. A cup of cocoa, or Postum; a small piece of bread without butter, and an apple, make what I consider a good breakfast. I can then write for three hours without stopping.

After a really hearty meal, in which there are too many calories, I do not feel like writing. It takes two hours after a generous lunch to get me into a writing mood again. Yet I do not weigh 100 pounds. However, I am not worried by the fact that I may be under weight. It is generally conceded that people who are under weight have a chance to live longer than those who are over weight. If this turns out to be true in my case it will give me a chance to write more!

I cannot imagine how the brain would not get cloudy when too much food is eaten. If I have to write during the evening—with no supper—I try to have a piece of chocolate at hand; but I like it already broken into tiny bits, so that I may not have the distraction of breaking it. As most people are alleged to eat too much, I think that those who do brain work do not need so much food as do physical workers; at least, such has been my experience. Early rising and two meals a day are my standards when I want to write at my very best.

This final comment is not germane to food, but I add it as an idiosyncrasy: I do not like people to talk to me while I am working, of course, but I do like to feel that they are in the same, or the next, room, or within call! Solitude is all very well; but after twelve years on the prairies, give me noise!—N. N.

When I had finished work on one of my stories published less than a year ago, and had made the typing as neat and attractive as I knew how, I sent it out to seek a home in the pages of some magazine. It came back in short order with the usual printed slip. Out it went again and again, with the same result. For the first three or four times that it came back from its excursions into the cold, heartless atmosphere that is by many supposed to pervade the editorial rooms, I made minor tex-

tual alterations — without in the least lessening the speed of its subsequent return to the home roost. Then I put on my real Sunday thinking cap. All at once the title, consisting of the one word "Branded", struck me as futile and meaningless; whimsically, it somehow reminded me of Brandied Cherries, or Brandied Peaches, and seemed to suggest nothing whatever of the brand on the hero's arm to which it actually referred. So I changed the title to "Calico Bill's Understudy", a title that came to me like an inspiration. Under this new caption the story went forth on its eighth journey, and, through an oversight on my part, it went to one of the seven magazines that had already rejected it. I never saw that manuscript again; but in a few weeks came a nice little note from the editor enclosing a check for $40, and a request for more stories. That's one answer to the question: "What's in a Name?"—T. L. K.

I have found the editor of The Mentor, Springfield, Ohio, very courteous. An article I submitted to his magazine was returned with a letter explaining that the article was too short and did not give enough detail to be suitable to his publication, but if I would expand the article, giving more detail; also have a certain photograph enlarged; they would gladly give the article consideration.

An article which I sent to System, Chicago, Ill., was returned with a letter explaining that most of the material which they used was that which dealt with problems that confronted the executives of large business concerns and that this article did not meet their need; but that they would be glad to have me submit material along the line that they could use.

Grit, Williamsport, Penna., purchases various kinds of material. They use feature articles which must be illustrated by photographs, and they conduct a department known as the People's Forum in which they use short essays of not more than two hundred words. The subject of these may be anything in which the public is interested. Their Household Department uses household discoveries, and they have a Golden Rule Club which uses material telling of some worthwhile act that has been performed by a boy or girl.

A person who wishes to write for this publication, which is published weekly, will do well to secure a sample copy and study it before submitting material. Then, he will know to which department to send his material.

I find it a good plan to secure copies of magazines with which I am not familiar. By studying these I am able to find new markets; also to write upon different subjects because I get new ideas from studying the writing of others.—E. R. C.

In the "New Wrinkle Contest," appearing regularly in The Lumber Worker, a practical monthly devoted to logging, saw milling and wood working, suggestions for

inventions of particular appeal to said industry are considered and paid for at the rate of $15.00 for the best, $10.00 for second best, and $5.00 for third best, submitted during the month.

Average length of articles published is two hundred and fifty words. Pen drawings of contrivances must accompany articles.

Address contributions: "Novel Wrinkle Contest," The Lumber Worker, Presbyterian Building, Nashville, Tennessee.

Articles not accepted as worthy of a prize are frequently used in the regular columns, at space rates. A splendid little market for good ideas.—B. W. C.

A square cheese box can be converted into a very satisfactory card filing box in a short time. (Standard card size is 3x5, etc.) Each month I go through the market section and pick out the ones I think I can use, typing name, address and a brief note on the needs of the magazine on one of the cards. The reverse side of the card I use to note acceptances and rejections. On trying the postoffice plan, suggested by E. T. in the August, 1926, issue, I find that our postoffice sells the unclaimed magazines by the three month contract, and is not allowed to give them away.

Gibson Art Co., Cincinnati, is very prompt in reporting on material sent them.

Butler, Thomas & Co., Philadelphia, reports that it does not purchase verse.—S. K.

Progressive Farmer is a very good publication with which to deal. The standard rate for short articles, 100 to 500 words, is one dollar, but there is usually a contest every month with awards of $10 and $5 for the two best articles on a given subject. A contest for farm wives with $5 for the best article is announced at the same time, as is one for the young folks with an award of $3. Fifty cents each is paid for very short contributions to the "Mistakes I Have Made" department. Editorial offices of the Progressive Farmer are located at Raleigh, N. C., Birmingham, Ala., Memphis, Tenn, and Dallas, Texas. Pays on publication.

Grit, Williamsport, Pa., pays fifty cents each for contributions to the Woman's Exchange department. No recipes are wanted. Send details of short-cuts you make in housework and homemaking.

I have found that you can get several thousand extra words service from a typewriter ribbon by turning it over. Where expenses are high and checks are few, this means a lot.—G. L. C.

Daniel G. Stevens, the book editor for The Judson Press or the American Baptist Publication Society at Philadelphia, writes: "If your book manuscript should come to us recommended by our Religious Education Department, I am sure our Business Department would very readily authorize publication. I would suggest that you

get in touch with Dr. W. E. Chalmers, or with Dr. S. E. Roberts, or Mrs. E. M. Finn." Sheldon L. Roberts, the leadership-training director for the Judson Press, writes: "Almost all religious education books are developed in outline through a long process of suggestion and criticism by a score or more of leading experts in cooperation with the department of education of the International Council and the cooperation of the provisional advisory group. Naturally these leaders are inclined to favor the books which have been carefully developed under their supervision. A number of the independent publishing houses, Doran and Revell, especially, are seeking manuscripts of this kind since they get no opportunity at the manuscripts developed through the regular religious education channels. Why not try them?" This makes the Judson Press practically a closed market for such book manuscripts from the independent writer.

B. R. Donaldson, of The Dearborn Independent, Dearborn, Michigan, writes: "We want facts in an article. Comments and opinions are not sufficient. We do not need any article on the order of an enlarged editorial."

Furniture Index, Jamestown, New York, pays 1c a word for feature material on publication; $4.00 per photograph suitable for reproduction without art work, and $2.00 for photographs of individuals. They like to have photographs to illustrate their articles.

Eagle Freshwater, of the Furniture Record, Grand Rapids, Michigan, writes that they are always interested in something new and interesting about retail furniture stores.—L. E. D.

Mystery Magazine, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, Robert Simpson, editor, insists emphatically on stamped, addressed envelopes accompanying manuscripts. Enclosing only sufficient postage will not do, according to a notation on a rejection slip.

The Saturday Evening Post, Philadelphia, is very courteous about suggestions. Although unable to use an article which I proposed doing for the magazine, "The Editors" wrote back that they highly appreciated my keeping the Post in mind!

I have found Robert Thomas Hardy, New York literary agent, a gentleman to deal with. He told me recently that he reads none of his manuscripts in his office, because of a heavy office routine, but takes them all home with him. However, he may have changed his practice, now that he has become editor of Zest. One of his favorite phrases is, "Your story doesn't quite make the grade."

Collier's has discontinued its page of assembled humor and now I'm wondering what is going to be done with the epigrams it paid me $5 apiece for but hasn't published. However, it is still using humorous quatrains for which it pays $10 each in a department entitled "Ruthless Rimes."—H. S. S.

When the Writer Reads

The Free-Lance Writer's Hand-Book

William Dorsey Kennedy, editor of The Writer, has compiled and edited an interesting and constructively helpful volume under the title that heads this book note. Its four hundred pages are divided into two Parts, the first consisting of some forty short articles chiefly reprinted from the writings of Katharine Fullerton Gerould, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Augustus Thomas, Henry Seidel Canby, Ben Ames Williams, and other writers of lesser position, grouped under ten "books". These subject-groups include such topics as Fiction (nine articles), Journalism (six), Plays and Scenarios (five), Verse (three), Criticism (three), Humor (two), Publicity and Advertising (three), The Author and the Agent (two), and Practical Aids to Writers (four). Five articles of a general nature serve as introductory material.

Naturally, when a single volume covers so wide a range of subjects no one of them can be treated very completely, but the articles are suggestive and for the most part are written by those who know their fields. For example, A. Hamilton Gibbs knows how to write a novel, but three pages cannot disclose much of his method; any more than Augustus Thomas can be expected to say much that is helpful regarding "Breaking into Broadway" in two pages.

Other articles are much longer, and more definite in treatment, but in the main it seems a pity that so excellent an idea could not have been more fully wrought out. Nevertheless, this section of the work contains much material of interest to writers who wish to have a swift survey of the entire field. Part II. consists of about 150 pages of condensed up-to-date notes on "The Literary Market".

The Writer Publishing Company, Cambridge, Mass.

Great Short-Stories of the World

The most comprehensive as well as the best-considered collection of short-stories covering the whole range of fiction, ancient and modern, taking in perhaps two-score countries, bears the foregoing title. It is edited by Barrett H. Clark and Maxim Lieber, and comes from the press of Robert M. McBride & Company, New York. It is a worth-while conspectus.

The volume consists of 1080 large pages of small but entirely legible

type, and will be welcomed by countless authors and students as a means for studying the rise and development of short fiction in all lands. The editors are becomingly modest and make no extravagant claims for their work, realizing as they must that sound opinions often differ, and that canons of taste scarcely exist in certain national fields. Furthermore, it would take several life-times to cover the whole range of short narratives of all time, for it needs nearly five thousand years to bring us back to Egypt and its first recorded stories, and a full view of the fiction of all literate lands would demand many volumes instead of one.

The editors were also confronted by difficulties of language, as well as the unwillingness of several publishers to permit the republication of certain stories unless at a high charge. So the task of selection was a stupendous one—and as a whole it has been admirably performed.

Due to the limitations of language just mentioned, and consequently to inability to read any considerable number of stories written by certain nationals, it is only to be expected that the compilers of any such world-survey of short fiction should be compelled to depend largely in several instances upon published short-story collections. Therefore those students of the subject who have in their libraries the best-known of these collections, as well as certain anthologies of "remote" national literatures, will recognize the large indebtedness of the editors to prior anthologists. Indeed, no other course was open to them, since the first-hand knowledge of two men could not be encyclopedic. For the foregoing reasons, "Great Short Stories of the World" is rather a collection of collections than a great original work in all its parts. Nevertheless, it is an extremely useful and admirably available survey that is to be commended cordially.

It must be said that the selections made from the stories of non-English-writing authors have been more satisfactorily made than in the case of British and American writers. Perhaps this is due to the fact, as explained in the preface, that "lists were submitted to and passed upon by a number of specialists, particularly in the case of those sections whose literature was little known." This was as it should have been, of course, but it will leave some of us wondering why, since only a few real moderns could be included in a collection that is not either avowedly or actually up-to-date, the only living British and American writers represented should be Arthur Morrison, George Moore, Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson, Willa Cather and James Branch Cabell.

Excellent as this work is, within the limitations of the authors' plans, it is to be hoped that a large international group of scholars who know fiction will some day cooperate to produce a "library" built on the well-planned lines of this very useful volume.

The Writer's Monthly

A Journal for All Who Write

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IMPORTANT NOTICES

Change of address must reach the publishers before the fifteenth of the month preceding issue, otherwise no number can be duplicated. Subscribers must give old address when sending in the new, specifically addressing the notice to The Writer's Monthly.

Return postage must accompany all regular articles intended for publication.

In no case can short items for the Departments be returned if unavailable.

Notice of accepted material will be sent promptly with payment on acceptance. However, items for "Experience Meeting" will be paid for only in shorter or longer subscriptions to *The Writer's Monthly*, to be sent to any desired person. Items of news will not be paid for.

Vol. XXIX FEBRUARY No. 2

From the National Press Bay Committee, with headquarters at 150 Nassau Street, New York City, comes the announcement that America is to be the first country to dedicate a national shrine in honor of the Press. It is to be built by men and women of the profession in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York. "The press" in its larger sense includes every phase of the printing and publishing industry, but Writers, as the creative part of the industrial world related to the production of the printed word, are no small part of such a great coterie.

For the first time the craftsmen of the pen are being linked in a common cause to create an enduring monument to the service of literature to the nation. Public recognition is thus to be given to the professional writer as a great force in our national life in advancing the standards of human happiness and endeavor. In building this shrine, the profession takes its place beside other national interests which are erecting similar tributes in the Cathedral, amongst them the medical and legal professions, education, the arts, and others.

The Committee in charge of the project is confident that authors will wish to uphold the plan. While it is true that the literary genius of America finds its true memorial in the minds and hearts of the reading public, yet surely it is time that America build her own Poets' Corner and that living American writers help to do it. "Books are a substantial world", and literature the most seductive of the professions. The National Committee feels that the vast number of men and women who follow the craft of writing, in whatever branch, will wish to see some permanent memorial to the spiritual qualities of their profession, which will be an acknowledgment of its influence in our national life that offers at the same time a tribute to the Divine source of all inspiration. Obviously, no more appropriate setting could be found for a memorial to the Press of the country than in the huge structure now being built in New York, which is as non-sectarian as any house of worship could well be.

More important than the fact that it will be the largest cathedral in the English-speaking world, is its international and non-sectarian quality. The Cathedral is being built by contributions from people of all races and creeds. It

serves not the community only but the whole nation. Already Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Gentiles have spoken from its pulpit.

The shrine which every member of the profession is invited to help equip will take the form of a chapel opening from the side of the great nave or central aisle. This will rise 115 feet from floor to roof. Stained glass windows will record some of the activities of the press and its part in the progress of civilization.

Somewhere in the scheme of decoration, an appropriate place may be found for the names of those oustanding figures who have added lustre to the profession.

The cost of erecting and equipping the chapel will be from $150,000 to $225,000.

It would be interesting to know whether many of our readers have been successful in the sale of ideas as such—that is, suggestions that corporations and individual merchants have accepted and paid for in either cash or a substantial amount of commodities.

Opportunities to submit ideas in contests, apart from the literary dress in which they are garbed, one sees constantly in national advertising, but there must be many more—necessarily of a less remunerative sort—constantly appearing in local newspapers and in house organs, trade periodicals, and by circular or poster announcement. We wish it were possible to find some data on how successful certain of our readers have been in winning such awards.

It seems hardly likely that many persons have sold enough workable ideas to justify their inventors or developers being called "Idea Men," but it is conceivable that as a side line the production of ideas for sale might prove profitable, and of course fascinating.

An alert inventive person can hardly walk our city streets without being impressed with an idea which, if skillfully presented to the right market, would be sure to result in a sale—with consequent savings, or business-getting advantages, to the interested concern.

Presumably, many such ideas are never marketed because their originators are unwilling to part with them for a few dollars; they "look so good" that patents are dreamed of—and only dreamed of. Then, too, many who are able to think of time- and labor- and money-saving devices are too modest to wish to exploit them, perhaps for fear of seeming picayunish in offering them for sale. But whatever be the reason, it is not only flowers that are born to blush unseen and waste their sweetness on the desert air, but ideas as well.

The editor of our Experience Meeting Department would welcome really brief instances of how ideas have been sold, provided they were novel enough to interest our readers in general.

One of the contributors to this issue of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY makes a good point when he says that he makes a practice of beginning the first line of his articles fully one third down the page, so as to give the editor plenty of room for filling in sub-headings when, as in the case of this magazine, they are used.

The idea is a good one—as is any plan to make one's manuscript easy to read and easy to edit.

Order is the first law of thought, but phantasy loves to wander. To bring sequence and conviction out of his imaginings is a vital task for every writer of fiction, whatever form that fiction takes.

H. C. S. Folks

Stephen S. Maxson, Minneapolis, Minn., had a short-story in the November issue of Psychology entitled "Mountain Madness".

Iva K. Wilson, Twin Falls, Idaho, has had the following contributions during the past year: "Writing as a Hobby", in The Writer's World (Los Angeles); three articles on the Home Page of the Dairymen's League News; an agricultural article in the Idaho Farmer (Boise); fourteen home and child articles in the Utah Farmer; an article in Scenic Highways (Provo, Utah); an article in Northwest Poultry Journal (Salem, Oregon); an article in Farm and Ranch (Dallas, Texas); and household helps in The Oregonian (Portland, Oregon).

Harriet C. Evans, San Antonio, Texas, has had published during the past year the following manuscripts: "Up Wilderness Trail" in Lutheran Young Folks (Philadelphia); "Posted Keep Out" in Beacon (Boston); "Over the Fence" in Kind Words; "The Christian's Home Circle, a one-act play in Christian Observer (Louisville, Ky.); "Margaret Burr, Mediator," a serial which began November 21 in The Lookout (Cincinnati).

Ada Mae Hoffrek, Rutherford, N. J., is the author of a poem, "The Garden of My Mind", in the December issue of Square Deals (New Freedom, Pa.); two articles, "Home Influence of Music" and "Music Hath Charms" in the November issue of Vaughan's Family Visitor (Lawrenceburg, Tenn.); and "A Christmas Carol" in the December issue of The Home Magazine (Nashville).

Elizabeth Florer (pen name), Monrovia, Calif., was awarded a prize of $100 recently by Physical Culture, for her story "How I Conquered Serious Disease".

Pearle E. Botsford, Dayton, Ohio, had a story entitled "The Redheaded Bees" in the Thanksgiving number of Lutheran Young Folks (Philadelphia), and another story, "The Man Who Would Not Dream" in the January issue of Dream World.

May Belleville Brown, Salina, Kansas, has charge of the Fiction Department in the Kansas Authors Club.

T. L. Krebs, Wichita, Kansas, is the president of the Eighth District of the Kansas Authors Club.

George Woods Hicks, Springville, Calif., has a series of articles entitled, "The Truth About Aimee Semple McPherson", appearing in The Foursquare Crusader (Los Angeles), beginning with the December 1 issue. This same series is being published by Christensen Press (Los Angeles) in the form of a fifty-page booklet. On January 18 Mr. Hicks lectured before the Women's Federated Clubs in Porterville, Calif., upon the subject, "What Price Literary Glory?" He is at present engaged in editing several special edition supplements to prominent San Joaquin Valley newspapers, the last two of which were Porterville Recorder and Exeter Sun.

C. J. Eustace, Toronto, Ont., is now Associate Editor of Bookseller & Sta-

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tioner (Toronto). He has an article in Lefax (Philadelphia) for September entitled "Unorthodox Collection Letters", and signed articles in both the November and December issues of Bookseller & Stationer.

Truman H. Woodward, Wapping, Conn., has this year had the following publications to his credit: A poem, "Where the Church Comes In", in The Congregationalist (Boston) for September 30; "A Unique Thanksgiving Service" in Church Management for November; and a real experience, "The Wedding Ring" in the January issue of Blue Book (Chicago).

Ada Escousse, New Orleans, La., is the author of "A Son of Israel" which appeared in the October issue of Our Missions (Techny, Ill.) and "Set a Thief", in the November 14 issue of Grit (Williamsport). Mrs. Escousse also won a prize for a criticism of a story in Woman's World (Chicago).

Saidee L. Slover, Lamesa, Texas, had a poem entitled "Planting" in one of the October issues of Countryside (Elgin, Ill.), and "The Christmas Tree" in the December 18 issue of the same magazine. A short-story, "The Enemy's Salt", was printed in the December 25 issue. What to Do (Elgin) printed another poem, "My Story Book", in the October 23 issue.

The first January number of Ace-High contained a story by Frank A. Halverson, Pittsburgh, Pa., entitled "When the Ice Went Out".

"The Light and Shadow Phase of Interior Decoration" by Catherine Beach Ely, New York, appeared in the November number of The Woman's Viewpoint.

Freeman H. Hubbard, New York, is the editor of the Hubbard Publishing Corporation, publishers of Cartoons, and Collegian Fun.

Earl Chapin May, New York, had an illustrated article in the December number of the Shrine Magazine under the title of "Getting the Man and his Boss Together".

Willa Morse Pinnell, Van Buren, Ark., had the following material published during last year: an article in the April number of Mother and Child, articles in the May and June numbers of Farm and Fireside; a story, "The Red Balloon", in the August 29 issue of Our Young People (Nashville); a story, "Dorothy Perkins—Her Hat", in the October 24 issue of Our Young People; and an article in the December issue of Capper's Magazine (Topeka, Kansas).

Anna L. Newsom, Boulder, Colo., had contributions in the following periodicals during the past year: Dairymen's League News; Grit (Williamsport); T. P. A. Magazine (St. Louis, Mo.); Unity (Chicago); National Engineer (Chicago); Own Your Own Home; Progressive Teacher (Morristown, Tenn.); David C. Cook Company (Elgin); Methodist Episcopal Church, South (Nashville); and Psychology Magazine.

"Buffalo" by Edgar Daniel Kramer, Baltimore, Md., appeared in the first January issue of Ace-High, and "Eats", a ballad by the same author, appeared in the January issue of Cowboy Stories.

S. Omar Barker, Buelah, New Mexico, is the author of a ballad, "What the Old Texan Misses", in the second December number of Ace-High Magazine, and another ballad of the range country, entitled "The Female of the Species".

"The Way of the Play", a story by Beatrice Hunter, Binghamton, N. Y., appeared in the January issue of Breezy Stories.

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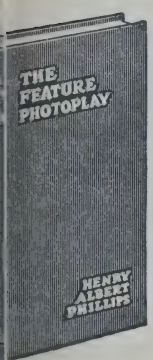

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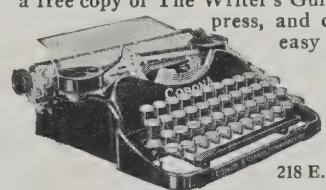

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Every endeavor is made to secure information regarding markets, but no guarantee is given of accuracy, nor is any responsibility assumed for operations based upon information given. Our readers are urgently asked to send information of new markets, suspensions, and prize contests.

PRIZE CONTESTS

American School Citizenship League announces its World Essay Contest for 1926-27, which is open to students of all countries.Two sets of prizes, to be known as the Seabury Prizes, are offered for the best essays on one of the following subjects: Open to Students in Normal Schools and Teachers Colleges—"The Teacher an Agent of International Goodwill." Open to Seniors in Secondary Schools—"How the Youth of the World Can Promote International Goodwill." Prizes of $75, $50 and $25 will be given for the three best essays in each set. Each essay must be accompanied by a topical outline and a bibliography with brief notes on each book. Essays must not exceed 5000 words (a length of 3000 words is suggested as desirable). Manuscripts not easily legible will not be considered. The name of the writer must not appear on the essay, which should be accompanied by a letter giving the writer's name, school, and home address, and sent to Dr. Fannie Fern Andrews, 405 Marlborough St., Boston 17, Mass., not later than June 1, 1927. Each country participating in the contest, other than the United States, shall submit the three best essays in each set (normal and secondary), these essays to be selected by judges appointed in each country. The United States judges will select, from these and from the essays written by pupils of the United States, those which in their opinion should receive the prizes. Students may write in their own language. The three best essays selected by the national judges must be translated into English when submitted to the United States judges. Information concerning literature on the essay subjects may be obtained from the Secretary of the League.

The Granite Monthly, Newport, N. H., offers prizes of $15, $10 and $5 for the best short-stories submitted. Write for details to The Editor, Granite Monthly, Newport, N. H.

The Witter Bynner Undergraduate Poetry Prize of $150 for the best 200 lines of poetry written by a college student was awarded to Langston Hughes, Lincoln University, for five poems. Honorable Mention was also given as follows: To Josephine Jackson, Henry Zolinsky, Eunice Gailey, D. A. Wandrei, Babette Hughes, Robert Lowe, George Dillon, Elizabeth Anthony, Marjorie I. Scott, and Waring Cuney.

True Story Magazine, 1926 Broadway, New York, is offering $10, $5 and $3 each month for the best letters stating why readers do or do not like the different features in each month's issue, and offering suggestions for improvement. Contest closes the 15th of each month. Address the Editor.

The Witter Bynner Undergraduate Poetry Prize of $150 for the best 200 lines of poetry is again being offered by Mr. Bynner under the auspices of the Palms. Only undergraduates in an American college or university may compete. A single poem or a group of poems may be entered, but only 200 lines will be considered. Poems previously published elsewhere than in college mag-

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Contest closes March 1st, 1927. Prize winners to be announced April 15th. In the event of a tie for any of the prizes, a prize of the amount offered will be awarded to each of the tying contestants.

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azines will not be eligible in the contest. The chosen poem will be published in Palms. The manuscripts must be typewritten in triplicate, and each sheet must bear the name and address of the contestant, together with his college. All entries must be mailed by March 31, 1927, to Witter Bynner, Box 1061, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The Hudson Theatre, New York, is presenting "The Noose", a melodrama by Willard Mack, based on a story by H. H. Van Loan. Although not a mystery play, the climax of the drama hinges upon a mysterious telephone call, and the situation has aroused so much discussion that "The Noose" Company is offering prizes of $250, $150, and $100 for solutions to the question "Whose voice told the warden over the telephone that the execution would not be carried out?" Competition closes March 17, 1927. Address solutions to The Hudson Theatre, 139 W. 44th St., New York.

Chautauqua Institution offers through Mr. C. C. Birchard, Boston music publisher, a prize of $1000 for the best religious cantata for adult mixed voices and piano accompaniment. The work must be approximately thirty minutes in length, and may include an episode or choral strains for children's voices, a choral or hymn section for the audience or for a unit of singers seated in the audience, soli, if deemed effective by the composer. However, these features are not obligatory for the success of the composition. The text may be from any source not covered by copyright. If a new and unpublished text is used, the composer must present satisfactory evidence of his right to use the same. Manuscripts must be sent anonymously, accompanied by a sealed envelope containing marks of identification. Compositions submitted must not have been published or publicly performed. Competition closes April 1, 1927. All manuscripts must be sent to Prof. H. Augustine Smith, Boston University, 20 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.

The World's Work, Garden City, L. I., N. Y., is offering a prize of $1000 for the best article based upon the theories advanced by William T. Foster and Waddill Catchings, in the series of economic articles which began in World's Work for September and will continue through February. Articles should not exceed 4500 words. Contest closes March 31, 1927.

Maclean's Magazine, 143 University Avenue, Toronto, Canada, is offering prizes of $500, $250, $150, and $100 for the best Canadian short-stories written by Canadian authors. Manuscripts must be signed by a pen-name, and accompanied by a sealed envelope containing the author's name and address. Contest closes March 1, 1927.

Poetry, Chicago, announces the following awards of annual prizes: The Helen Haire Levinson prize of $200 to Mark Turbyfill, for "A Marriage with Space", published in their May issue; The Guarantors' prize of $100 to Agnes Lee, for "New Poems", published in their December issue, and "Howard Shaw, Architect", published in their July issue; the Young Poet's prize of $100 to Marie Luhrs, for "Patterns for Weavers" in their November issue; and the John Reed Memorial prize of $100 to Herbert S. Gorman for "Desultory Epistles" in their July issue.

Harper's Magazine, 49 E. 33rd. St., New York, announces its second annual intercollegiate literary contest, for the best pieces of English prose written by undergraduates in American colleges and universities. First prize, $500; second prize, $300; third prize, $200. Manuscripts to be eligible, must be the original work of enrolled students in any of the undergraduate departments of American colleges and universities. They must be written in prose, but may be stories, essays, articles, or any other form of prose work suitable for magazine publication. Translations or adaptations are ineligible. The limit of length is 7000 words in the case of stories,

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4000 in the case of articles, essays, etc. Manuscripts which have been published elsewhere than in a college magazine or newspaper are ineligible; but the fact that a manuscript has been published in a college magazine or college newspaper shall not exclude it from consideration. It is understood that, subject to the foregoing conditions, manuscripts written as themes in English courses, or for college papers, or otherwise, shall be equally eligible. No competitor may submit more than one manuscript. The manuscripts shall be mailed to Intercollegiate Literary Contest, Harper's Magazine, 49 East 33rd St., New York, not later than midnight on March 5, 1927. Each manuscript shall be typewritten, shall bear the name and address of the author, and shall be accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing sufficient stamps for the return of the manuscript. The judges will be Henry Seidell Canby, Editor of The Saturday Review of Literature, Elinor Wylie, author of "The Orphan Angel", and William McFee, author of "Command."

Drama League of America is conducting four national contests in play writing, as follows: (1) College, Historical, One-act; (2) Little Theatre, Experimental, One-act; (3) Biblical, Non-Sectarian, any length; (4) All-American, full length. Contests close May 1, 1927. For further particulars see copy of The Drama, published by the Drama League of America, 59 East Van Buren St., Chicago, Ill.

The following prize contests, alphabetically arranged, are still running. Full particulars have been given in previous issues, but details are repeated here.

Adventure, Spring and Macdougal Sts., New York, offers an annual prize of $100 for the best poem published by them during the year.

The American Magazine, 250 Park Ave., New York, offers a monthly prize contest for the best letters of not over 400 words on a given subject. Prizes are $30, $20 and $10. Subject changes each month. Contest closes the 20th of the month.

The American Rifleman, 1108 Woodward Bldg., Washington, D. C., offers a prize of $100 for the best hunting or shooting story received during the year, paying $10 for each story printed.

The Atlantic Monthly, Boston, offers $10,000 for the most interesting novel of any sort long enough to deserve book publication. It may be an adventure tale, or romance, or psychological novel. The award will be paid for serial and book rights alone, and royalties accruing from book publication will be additional. Photoplay and dramatic rights remain with the author. The book will be issued by Little Brown & Co., Boston, for the Atlantic Monthly Press. Translations will not be entered. All manuscripts must be unpublished work, typed double space on one side of the paper, submitted under one's own name or a pseudonym before February 15, 1927, to the Atlantic Monthly Company, 8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass.

The Blue Book Magazine, 36 South State St., Chicago, Ill., offers five monthly prizes of $100 each for the best "actual fact" stories of true experiences in the following special fields—Adventure, Mystery, Business, Sport, Humor. Stories should not exceed 2000 words and should be shorter, if possible. Address contributions to True Experience Editor, The Blue Book Magazine.

The Caroline Sinkler Prize of $50 is offered by Miss Caroline Sinkler, of Philadelphia, Penn., for the best book of poems published by a Southern writer during the current year, and may be competed for by bona fide citizens of the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. Each book entered must

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be accompanied by a statement of resident citizenship of the author. One person only will receive the prize, which shall not be divided. Contest closes on February 28, 1927. Address all inquiries and books to Caroline Sinkler Prize Contest, c/o Poetry Society of South Carolina, 62 Broad St., Charleston, S. C.

The Chicago Trust Company offers annual prizes of $300 and $200 for the two best manuscripts on original research in business and finance. The competition is open to bank employees, and students of banking, commerce or law. In addition to these prizes, there is a triennial research prize of $2500 for an unpublished study, submitted in competition, which is considered to contain the greatest original contribution to knowledge and advancement in the field outlined. This award will be made in the autumn of 1927. Papers should be sent not later than June 1, 1927, and should be addressed to Professor Leverett S. Lyon, Professor of Economics, Robert Brookings Graduate School of Economics and Government, 1724 I Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

College Humor, Chicago, Ill., is offering a prize of $10,000 for the best novel, jointly with **First National Pictures** which see.

The Crowell Publishing Company, as publishers of The Woman's Home Companion, and **The John Day Company, Inc.,** will award $50,000 in prizes for the two most interesting, well-written novels best adapted to serial and book publication. The Crowell Publishing Company will pay $20,000 for the winning novel written by a man, and a like sum for the winning novel written by a woman, for the first American serial rights. The John Day Company will pay $5000 for the United States and Canadian book rights of the winning novel written by a man, and a like sum for the winning novel written by a woman as advance payment on account of royalties. A competitor may submit more than one manuscript, but each must be entered separately. All manuscripts submitted must be original unpublished works written in English. Translations will not be eligible. No manuscript containing less than 50,000 words should be submitted; preference will be given to manuscripts of full novel length. All manuscripts must be addressed to "Novel Competition," c/o The John Day Company, 25 West 45th St., New York City. A printed agreement, which will be sent on request, must be mailed in a sealed envelope marked "Novel Competition" at the same time the manuscript is submitted, together with sufficient postage for return of manuscript. Competition closes July 1, 1927.

Curtis Brown, Ltd., 116 West 39th St., New York, in conjunction with Frederick A. Stokes Company and The Forum, offers a net award of $7000 and royalties for the best American biographical novel. The author retains stage, film and translation rights. The competition is open to all authors regardless of residence or nationality. Manuscripts must reach Curtis Brown, Ltd., not later than March 1, 1927. All manuscripts must be original with the contestant and in the English language. No translation will be accepted. No manuscript may bear the actual name of the author but must bear a pseudonym under the title. Manuscripts should be of not less than 80,000 words, and not more than 110,000 words. A competitor may send in as many manuscripts as he chooses but each must be entered separately according to directions. Procure an entry form from Curtis Brown, Inc., to go with every manuscript submitted.

The John Day Company, Inc., 25 West 45th St., New York, is offering $50,000 in prizes for the best novel written by a man, and the best novel written by a woman. The prizes are offered jointly with the **Crowell Publishing Company,** which see.

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First National Pictures and College Humor, Chicago, Ill., offer a joint prize of $10,000 for the story or novel best adapted for magazine and motion picture production. Any writer, whether amateur or professional, is eligible. Any writer may submit as many stories as he sees fit, but they must be original. No translations or collaborations will be considered. Novels or stories must be approximately 100,000 words in order to meet the needs of serialization in College Humor. The contest is not, however, limited to novels—stories from 5000 to 110,000 words will be considered. All manuscripts must be signed with a pen name, the author's real name and address being placed in an attached sealed envelope bearing the pen name given on the manuscript. All manuscripts must be sent charges prepaid and accompanied by postage for their return, addressed College Humor, Chicago, Ill. Contest closes midnight, February 28, 1927.

The Forum, New York, is offering in conjunction with F. A. Stokes Co., a net prize of $7000 and royalties for the best biographical novel, through Curtis Brown, Inc., which see.

Hart, Schaffner & Marx, Chicago, offer annually prizes amounting to $2000 for the best studies in the economic field. The prizes are divided as follows: Class A—first prize, $1000; second prize, $500. Class B—first prize, $300; second prize, $200. Class A includes any resident of the United States or Canada, without restriction. Class B includes only those who, at the time papers are sent in, are undergraduates of any American college. Subjects for studies are suggested, but any other subjects may be chosen, if approved by the Committee. Manuscripts should be inscribed with an assumed name, the class in which they are presented, and accompanied by a sealed envelope giving the real name and address of the competitor, together with any degrees or distinctions already obtained. If competitor is in Class B, the sealed envelope should contain the name of the institution in which he is studying. Contributions should be sent to J. Laurence Laughlin, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill., on or before June 1, 1927. Further particulars and a list of subjects already approved by the Committee may be obtained from Mr. Laughlin.

Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce is offering four prizes for the best authentic historical pageants submitted, portraying the history of Hot Springs dating from the arrival of the Spanish explorer, Ferdinand DeSoto, in 1541, to the present day. The pageant will be staged to celebrate the 100th birthday of Hot Springs National Park in 1932. The first prize consists of $1000 cash; second prize, a free trip to Hot Springs with hotel entertainment for two weeks; third prize, a free trip to Hot Springs with hotel entertainment for one week; fourth prize, free transportation to Hot Springs. The contest is open for twelve months, and anyone may submit scenarios. Address Centennial Celebration Club, P. O. Box 886, Hot Springs National Park, Ark.

Life Cartoon Comedies, 598 Madison Ave., New York, will pay $50 for each scenario or idea they can use for their comedies, now being released by Educational Film Exchanges, Inc. Each of these comedies is five hundred feet (about half a reel) in length, and is crammed with as many humorous ideas, or "gags" as can possibly be included in that limited space. Ideas do not have to be in scenario

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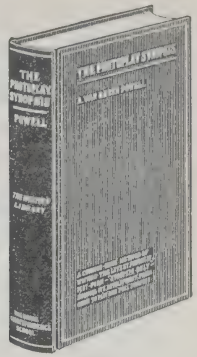

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McClure's Magazine, New York, offers jointly with Cosmopolitan Book Corporation and Cosmopolitan Productions $25,000 for the novel best adapted for book and magazine publication and motion picture production—covering serial, book and photoplay rights. The novel must not be more than 110,000 words in length, nor less than 80,000 words. All manuscripts must be signed with a pen-name, with the author's real name and address in an attached envelope bearing the pen-name. A writer may enter more than one novel. All manuscripts must be typewritten, double-spaced, and on one side of the paper only, and sent charges prepaid, and with postage for return, before March 1, 1927, to The Editors, McClure's Prize Novel Contest, 119 West 40th St., New York, N. Y.

The Pasadena Center of the Drama League of America offers a prize of $300 for the best full-evening play, and $100 for the best short play. Full evening plays must cover at least two hours for reading time. State the playing time on each manuscript. One-act plays must not exceed forty-five minutes for reading time. All subject matter must be original—although two or more authors may collaborate. There is no limit to the number of plays that each author may submit.

Each manuscript shall bear the inscription: "Submitted in the 1926-27 Play Contest of the Pasadena Center of the Drama League of America." All manuscripts must be in the hands of Miss Louise West, 735 El Campo Drive, Box 592, R. 3, Pasadena, Calif., on or before March 1, 1927.

The Penn Publishing Company, 925 Filbert St., Philadelphia, will award seven prizes in cash for play manuscripts. First prize, $1000; second prize, $500; third prize, $250; fourth prize, $100; and three prizes of $50 each. The plays must be at least three acts, and may be comedies, melo-dramas, or serious plays. The costuming and settings should be simple; the plots clearly defined; the plays free from objectionable features. Contest closes March 1, 1927. In the event of a tie for any of the prizes, a prize of the amount offered will be awarded to each of the tying contestants. Detailed information sent upon request.

The Southern Prize of $100 is offered annually by Mrs. Craig Barrow, of Savannah, Ga., to encourage the writing of poetry in the South, and may be competed for by bona fide citizens of the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. No manuscripts must be over 100 lines in length. Only one poem by an author may be entered, and this poem must be entered for the Southern Prize only. Poems must be previously unpublished, and not copyrighted. Poems must be submitted anonymously. All poems must be in the hands of the Secretary of the Poetry Society of South Carolina by February 28, 1927. Address all inquiries and manuscripts to: The Poetry Society of South Carolina, 62 Broad St., Charleston, S. C.

The Tanager, Box 66, Grinnell, Iowa, offers a prize of $25 for the best poem submitted by its author before April 1, 1927. The poem may be of any type except a translation, but must not already have appeared in print.

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Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn., publishes a Yale Series of Younger Poets, which is open to writers of American citizenship, who are under thirty years of age and have not previously published a volume of verse. Manuscripts for this competition are due May 1st and November 1st in each year. The best manuscript submitted in each competition is, if recommended by the Editor, published at the expense of the Yale University Press, the author receiving the usual 10% royalty on all copies sold in the United States. It is permissible to include poems previously published in periodicals or newspapers, if the consent of such journals is given for such republication. Contestants should address manuscripts and correspondence to the Editor, Yale Series of Younger Poets, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Dixie Dairy and Poultry Journal, 110 Seventh Avenue, Nashville, Tenn. Monthly. Editor, Edgar A. Wright. Reports: "This publication uses articles on poultry and dairying, and other material suitable for Southern rural readers; also poetry of nature or countryside or simpler narrative."

Keystone Feature Service, 801 Federal St., N. S., Pittsburgh, Pa. Joe Jay Freeman, Manager, reports: "We are in the market for short-stories of 1200 to 2000 words, that will interest readers of weekly papers published in small towns. Payment is made on acceptance. There is no fixed rate, material being paid for what it is worth. Stamps must accompany manuscripts to insure return."

Children, 353 Fourth Ave., New York. Mrs. Harold A. Littledale, Mng. Editor, reports: "We are planning to start a new department in our magazine, which will probably be called 'Why Not Try This?' For this department we would like to have short contributions telling ways to simplify the care of children and explaining little experiments which parents have found were short-cuts in bringing up their children. In other words, this department ought to be a place where parents can exchange trade secrets. Contributions should not be more than 300 words in length. One dollar will be paid for each."

Rod and Gun in Canada, Woodstock, Ont., Canada, is now entitled **Rod and Gun & Canadian Silver Fox News.**

The Outside Contributor, 5 Furness Road, London, N. W. 10, England. Monthly, 6d. Editor, John Missenden. The keynote of this publication is to keep writers in touch with markets in England and America, and contributions which have this object in view, and which conform to the high literary standards of the paper, are especially welcomed. Articles on how to write are not acceptable; but only those upon when to write

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The Filling Station and Petroleum Marketer. Editor, Grady Triplett. Reports: "We have made changes in our editorial department, whereby articles from trade-paper writers will be handled through the Tulsa, Oklahoma, office instead of the home office of the Gulf Publishing Company, Houston, Texas. A booklet has been prepared outlining the type of editorial matter that is wanted from free-lance writers. Writers are urged to send for a copy of this. Merchandising articles are wanted, written from the selling activities of petroleum jobbers, executives of the marketing divisions of the major oil companies and retail filling station merchants. These should be fact stories, briefly written and properly illustrated, telling how one concern or one man has increased his sales volume or otherwise improved business. Send all communications to The Filling Station and Petroleum Marketer, P. O. Box 562, Tulsa, Okla."

John Martin's Book, 33 West 49th St., New York. Monthly, 40c; $4.00. Associate Editor, Helen Waldo. Reports: "We use stories and articles for children from 8 to 12, in our older section—length not more than 2000 words—dealing with nature, history, biography, adventure stunts, puzzles, games, parties, things to make. In our Johnny Junior section for children of 7 and under, we use articles or stories dealing with simple games, and things to make. These should preferably be under 1500 words. We are fairly well supplied at present, in all lines, particularly in fanciful material and verse. We use one serial at a time, six chapters, adventurous, both boy and girl appeal, for the older group. Chapters can run to 3000 words as a limit. No photographs are used except as suggestion for illustrations. Material is reported on in two weeks, and payment is made on acceptance at about 1c a word. Payment for serials is made on publication."

The Music Educator, 187 Broadway, Portland, Ore. Six times a year; distributed free to homes by music teachers. Editor, C. Drake. Report: "We use articles not longer than 300 words, promoting music study as part of the child's education, telling parents the value of training the fingers in music, and how to keep the child interested. Also use articles telling of 'successful children' in music, and how the success was accomplished through the parents. No photographs used. Material reported on in two weeks, and payment made on publication."

The Treasure Chest, 1402 DeYoung Bldg., San Francisco, Calif. Monthly; $2.50. Editor, S. B. Dickson. Report: "Interested in humorous, pleasant stories appealing to boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 15, not longer than 2500 words. Welcome good juvenile jingles and poems, but do not pay for same. Not interested in photographs or illustrations, except when photographs accompany good feature stories. Not interested in ideas. Pay on publication, at approximately $10 per story."

International Studio, 119 West 40th St., New York. Monthly, 75c; $6.00. Editor, Wm. B. McCormick. Report: "This is primarily an art magazine for collectors and therefore popular stories or news stories are not desired. Use articles of about 2000 words, occasionally longer or shorter. Can use nothing on exhibitions except before they occur. Photographs must accompany all articles. No articles ordered on description. Material reported on within one to two weeks, and payment made on publication at a rate of $40 to $100 per article."

College Stories, 8 W. 40th St., New York. Quarterly, 25c; $1.00. Editor, James Vincent Spadea. Report: "Stories must be Collegiate, i. e., about school or college life, and may be 5000 words and

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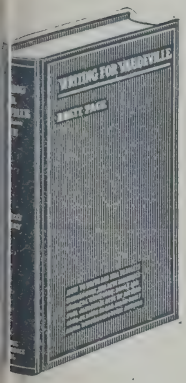

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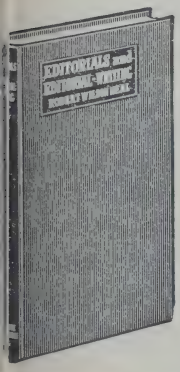

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Progress, 205 West Monroe St., Chicago, Ill. Monthly, 15c; $1.50. Editor, Anna E. Reury. Report: "Use historical, biographical, travel and constructive articles not over 1500 to 1800 words, with photographs. No fiction, sociological articles, or serials used. Material reported on in ten days, and payment made on publication."

The Miniature Mirror of Ozarkian Edens, Kingston, Ark. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, Otto Ernest Rayburn. Formerly Ozark Life. Reports: "This magazine is now published in pocket size and runs feature numbers almost exclusively, for instance, the December issue was called 'The Ozarkian Springs Number'. All material for publication must be brief and to the point. Poems must be crisp and well flavored. Articles should be creamy and tasty. Stories of the 'hillbilly' type must not reflect too strongly upon said 'hillbilly'. This magazine is a review of the better things in Ozarkian life, and writers must understand Ozarkian character in order to place material with it. Reports on manuscripts are made within ten days."

The Marion Theatre and Concert Studios, 317-18 Crary Bldg., Seattle, Wash. Director, Jackson Smith. Reports: "We are a booking and producing office, and are always on the lookout for material—lyrics, jokes, monologs, sketches and revue stuff. While we prefer that writers send us copyrighted material, this is not necessary. We report within thirty days, and pay either cash or royalties for accepted manuscripts. We read everything sent in and return manuscripts accompanied by the required amount of postage. We will not hold ourselves responsible for loss of manuscripts."

Tires, 383 Madison Ave., New York. Monthly; 20c; $2.00. Editor, Jerome T. Shaw. Reports: "We are always in the market for merchandising articles applying directly to the tire business, and not to articles describing the business methods of successful dealers. Sales articles based on the theory are not desired. We want descriptions of interesting window displays, advertising campaigns, etc., but the writers are cautioned against preparing articles on systems that have been established by the tire manufacturers. We get them direct from the factories. Articles of about 1200 words conform best to our editorial make-up. We wish portraits of live dealers; also photographs of samples of sales and stock-keeping forms. Material is reported on within a week; and payment is made on publication. The rate is half a cent a word for text; $1 for photographs."

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Candy and Ice Cream Retailer, 30 S. Michigan Av., Chicago, Ill. Monthly, 5c; 50c. Editor, Emmet Boyles. Feature stories about the retail candy stores, fountains and tea-room, of not more than 1000 words in length, preferably with photographs. Particularly interested in stories of actual experiences in methods of making merchandise purchases, keeping track of stocks, of inventories, etc., about retail candy manufacturer methods and process; about store displays, arrangements, etc.; about sales plans, hiring and training help, especially sales girls; advertising plans; window trims. These experiences must all contain the name and address of the person or persons referred to. Also interested in short features on the same subjects, of 50 to 200 words in length. Material is reported on within twenty-four hours, and payment is made on the tenth of the month following acceptance. The usual rate of payment is half a cent a word for text and $2.00 each for photographs.

Candy and Soda Profits, Guardian Life Bldg., St. Paul, Minn. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, R. E. Quinn. Articles from 500 to 2000 words in length, on soda fountain work, candy sales, advertising and window displays. Photographs, if suitable. Reports within three days. All contributions should be addressed to the magazine and not to the editor.

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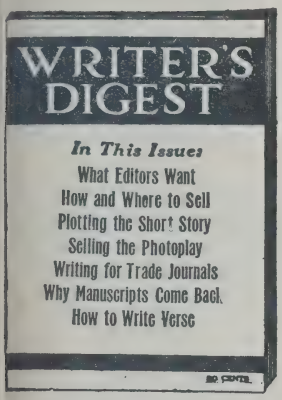

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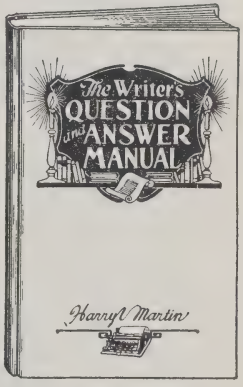

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Confectioners Gazette, 366 Broadway, New York. Monthly, 20c; $2.00. Editor, W. H. Boffey.

Confectioners Journal, 411 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Penn. Monthly, 25c; $3.00. Editor, Walter W. Gale.

Confectioners Review, Palace Theatre Bldg., Cincinnati, Ohio. Monthly, 25c; $3.00. Editor, M. J. Keefe.

Cracker Baker, 45 W. 45th St., New York. Monthly, 20c; $2.00. Editor, Albert Klopfer.

Delicatessen, 168 East 94th Street, New York. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, Isaac Pennamacoor.

Fountain Profits, 35 North 9th St., Portland, Oregon. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, Albert Hawkins. Articles on the soda fountain or soft drink industry. How to advertise and conduct a successful soda fountain or luncheonette business. How the fountain owner can drive new profits. Photographs used, and paid for in addition to the manuscript.

Ice Cream Field, Allen Bldg., Atlanta, Ga. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, W. B. Savell. Use stories from 1000 to 2000 words in length, relating to ice cream manufacturers, their industry and association, and also means of encouraging increased public consumption. Photographs will also be considered. Manuscripts are reported on immediately after receipt.

Ice Cream Review, Fifth and Cherry Sts., Milwaukee, Wis. Monthly, 25c; $2.00 Editor, E. K. Slater. Do not care for "write-ups" of ice cream plants, but articles on up-to-date plants that really have stories in them are acceptable. This publication reaches only the manufacturers of ice cream, not retailers. Any story of an ice cream factory must tell how that factory is doing something different for the advancement of the ice cream business. Ice cream manufacturers are vitally interested in merchandising methods. They want to read articles that will tell how they can sell more ice cream to the public, educate the public that ice cream is a food and not merely a confection, and stories of that order, properly handled will be accepted. Pay 25c an inch, after publication.

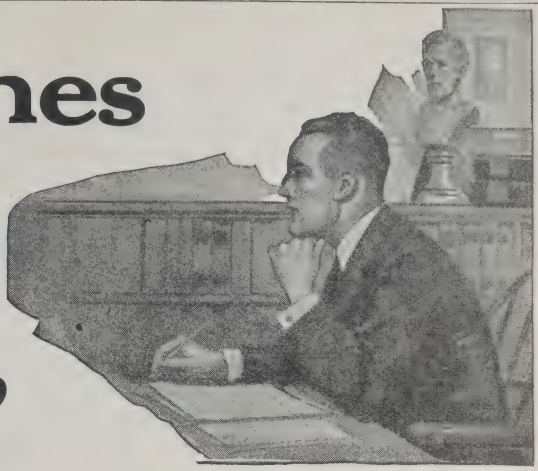
Ice Cream Trade Journal, 171 Madison Ave., New York. Monthly, 20c; $2.00. Editor, Thomas D. Cutler.

The International Confectioner, 621 Broadway, New York. Monthly, 25c; $1.00. Editor, George U. Harvey. Use interesting and valuable articles relative to the confectionery industry. Pay $5 per page, including photographs, if any. Payment made on publication.

Macaroni Journal, Braidwood, Ill. Monthly, 15c; $1.50. Editor, M. J. Donna. Articles of any length dealing with foods in general, with macaroni and noodles in particular; also articles concerning men or firms in the industry. Photographs of leading macaroni manufacturers and plants, exhibits, etc. Manuscripts reported on immediately, and payment on publication.

The Manufacturing Confectioner, 30 North La Salle St., Chicago, Ill. Monthly, 50c; $3.00. Editor, Earl R. Allured. A specialized business magazine devoted to the problems and interests incident to the manufacture of confections and the management of a candy factory. Edited in the interest of the executive, the purchasing agent, the chemist and the superintendent exclusively, and provides a medium for the free and frank discus-

"If Wishes Were Horses"



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sion of manufacturing policies and problems, methods and materials. It uses only articles applying to manufacturing problems. Reports on material within two or three weeks, and pays on publication.

New South Baker, Hurt Bldg., Atlanta, Ga. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, J. M. Clark. News articles and general matter concerning southern trade fields.

Northwestern Confectioner, 405 Broadway, Milwaukee, Wis. Monthly, 20c; $2.00. Editor, G. B. Kluck. Devoted to the manufacturing, jobbing and retail confectionery trade. Articles of 1000 to 1500 words, pertaining to confectionery trade, with particular reference to sales ideas, methods of conducting business, window displays, etc., will be considered. Photographs, if applicable to the text, are accepted.

Retail Baker, 411 Fourth Ave., New York. Weekly; $1.00. Editor, George Ament. Devoted to the interests of manufacturing retail bakers.

Soda Dispenser, Allen Bldg., Atlanta, Ga. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, W. B. Savell.

Soda Fountain, 25 Spruce St., New York. Monthly, 15c; $1.25. Editor, J. R. Ward. Interested in articles relating to the soda fountain trade, from 1000 to 2000 words in length. Also purchase local news from correspondents. Always looking for good photographs. Material is reported on within one month, and payment is made on publication.

Southern Carbonator and Bottler, Allen Bldg., Atlanta, Ga. Monthly, 20c; $2.00. Editor, W. B. Savell.

Sweets, Hurt Bldg., Atlanta, Ga. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, J. M. Clark. Print news articles and general matter concerning trade fields through which they circulate.

Western Baker, 417 Montgomery St., San Francisco, Cal. Monthly, 20c; $2.00. Editor, Bert Patterson. Use accurate, scientific articles pertaining to the baking trade. Want articles (from 1000 to 1500 words) which contain real ideas that will help the baker in running his business. Occasionally use photographs of progressive bakeries or bakery window displays in the far western states. Manuscripts are reported on in two weeks, and payment on acceptance.

Western Confectioner, 57 Post St., San Francisco, Cal. Monthly, 25c; $3.00. Editor, Russell E. Tripp. Publish a regional trade journal for the candy, ice cream and soda fountain trade of the coast and Western states west of Rocky Mountains. Use special articles on technical subjects connected with those industries, retail merchandising, selling ideas, window trims, etc. Do not want general stuff on salesmanship, business, etc., especially such stuff as is syndicated to one journal in each field. Would be interested in stories of success by individuals, especially those located in the west. Articles must be from 500 to 1500 words in length. Photographs will be paid for according to price submitted with offer. Manuscripts are reported on at once, and payment is made on publication at the rate of half a cent a word.

DISCONTINUED

Home Happiness, Michigan-Ohio Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

All Sports Magazine, 5 N. Wabash St., Chicago, Ill.

Movie Monthly, 175 Duffield St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

Hot Dog, 1005 Ulmer Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio.

The Print Connoisseur, 154 East 38th St., New York. Mail returned unclaimed.

Bookplate Booklet, 17 Board of Trade Bldg., Kansas City, Mo. Mail returned unclaimed.

The Gammadion, Lock Box 624, Birmingham, Ala. Consolidated with the Southern Magazine.

Mayfair, Mayfair Fortnightly, Inc., New York. Mail returned unclaimed.

Novels Criticized

For the Prize Contests

MANY important contests are now running, with prizes from $2,000 to $25,000. See notices in the Where To Sell section of this number.

In addition, the publishers' readers in these contests are instructed to select other worthy manuscripts for possible publication. Never were chances better for the close reading and consideration of manuscripts written by authors who have not previously published a novel.

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Springfield, Massachusetts

The Circle of Futility—Poet's Wife: "Why do you run up such big gas bills?"

Poet: "To write my many poems."

Poet's Wife: "Why must you write so many poems?"

Poet: "To pay the gas bills."—Ladies' Home Journal.

Eureka!—All writers are somewhat egotistic, necessarily: no self-confidence, no "efforts."

One such met another, even more so.

"Who do you think you are, anyhow?" he sneered.

"I," replied the challenged party, "am the fellow who wins the prize contests you enter."—Ray W. Frohman.

Work Enough—The tramp paused outside the house.

"Clear out!" shouted the lady of the house. "I ain't got no wood to chop. There ain't nothin' you could do around here."

"But, madam, there is," retorted the wayfarer with dignity. "I could give you a few lessons in grammar."—Black & Blue Jay.

A Literary Dud—"I want to return this book I bought, 'Stories for All Occasions.'"

"What's the matter with it?"

"It's a fake! There's nothing there for a man to tell his wife when he gets home at 2 A. M."—Brooklyn Eagle.

Almost the Same—Alfred de Siever is a wonderful writer; he brings things home to me in a surprising way.

So does my laundryman.

—Allen Fortescue

Strictly Editorial—Teacher: "Name a collective noun."

Pupil: "Wastebasket."—O. Pshaw.

Editorial Omniscience.—It takes a block of wood two inches high, three inches wide, and four inches long to supply the pulp in a twenty-four-page newspaper. An unkind correspondent says it usually takes a rather larger block of the same material to produce the leading article.—Humorist (London).

Odd Menus

The orator eats tongue, I hear,
  The Sultan, turkey lunch;
The undertaker drinks his bier,
  The pugilist his punch.
The fisherman drinks Bass's ale,
  The flea, tea made of hops;
The barber eats his hare (with tale),
  The woodman eats his chops.
The acrobat spring water drinks,
  The banquet man eats toast;
Surveyors eat their stakes, methinks,
  And editors a roast.
Shoemakers always eat fried soles,
  The printer pi and sweets;
The hungry actor eats his roles,
  Policemen eat their beats.

—California Pelican.

A JOURNAL FOR ALL WHO WRITE

The Writer's Monthly

MARCH, 1927

VERSE THAT PAYS

WRITING FOR JUVENILES

AN "AD" MAN CONFESSES

THE ILLUSTRATED ARTICLE

PRIZE CONTESTS

MARKET NEWS

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Springfield, Mass.

The Writer's Monthly

A Journal for All Who Write

Volume XXIX MARCH, 1927 Number 3

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MARCH, 1927 Volume XXIX, No. 3

The Writer's Monthly

Writing for Young People

Helen Sherman Griffith

I. Stories for Little Children

The Author of this Series has had Published more than a Score of Books for Girls and Many Short-Stories

NOWADAYS, those writers who deal in articles on history, biography or personality generally begin their essays with a paragraph or even a page devoted to some topic so remote from their real subject as to give one, when coming suddenly upon the real theme, a breathless feeling. Maybe they employ this airplane method so as to get a "running jump"; which sounds very much like mixed metaphor, but expresses what I mean.

Perhaps I am old-fashioned, but in writing books for girls I cannot successfully employ this method. Suppose for instance, the opening chapter of my book is intended to describe my heroine and her life at boarding school: I could not get enough breath, figuratively, to start talking about—well, summer before-last's gold rush to Canada, for example, and then swing around abruptly with a remark something like this: "But that gold rush was as nothing compared to Basket Ball Day at Miss Barnstable's School, where Yvette Smith, the girl's favorite—" No, I couldn't do it.

I daresay it is gratifying to the writer who employs that roundabout device to imagine his readers settling down with a relieved "Now they're off". Personally, however, I feel safer to "get them off" without such preliminaries.

Aside from a natural desire to wish people to read what you have written, is the wish to have them want to read it "from the first word". With young people, like

Hamlet, the play (and the story)'s the thing, and they want that story with as few introductory remarks as possible. Indeed, the lengthiest introduction to any story for children should be "Once upon a time".

In writing books for girls I have always found that the best beginning is—to begin; to get at my story on the opening page. If the book, or tale, opens with a conversation—and girls love conversations—make the dialogue unfold the story and incidentally, the characters of those who take part in the story.

Ellen Olney Kirk, whose novel "The Story of Margaret Kent" was a land-mark of my schooldays, once advised me: "Make sure that your chief character is *interesting*, and your story will follow of itself." That is obviously necessary for one must admire and love a heroine. But it is supremely essential in a series of books about the same girl, for there the reader must find her interesting enough and lovable enough to care to follow her career through the series. But a little later I will touch on writing in series, and also stories for the boarding-school days. Let us take just now an earlier stage.

In speaking of juvenile fiction one first considers, I think, the story for very little children. About fifteen years ago I offered to several publishers a fairy story, long enough to make into a small book. It was persistently returned, and in each case the reason given me was that fairy stories had gone out of fashion. I felt quite sure they had not, from the children's point of view. It was merely that, at that period, a fad had been been launched to have every juvenile story "mean something" to the children; nature series, "Seaside and Wayside"; a lesson tucked into each book, like a pill in jelly. It was at that period that "instructive" bedtime stories were born.

One publisher who asked me for juvenile short stories said they must resemble exactly grown-up stories; there must be plot, suspense, most of all a "punch"—only, reduced to the nine-year-old mind. I found that type of story impossible to write.

By the way, that strikes me as the type of story which makes the present day moving picture with a big box-office appeal, don't you think so? But we hate to reflect that the average movie spectator mind is only nine years old!

The kind of story I have found attractive to children is that which treats a theme from the child's point of view. That is the real keynote of writing for children; see your story from the child's standpoint. Such a story will be understood at once, appreciated and loved.

Please never make the mistake of "writing down" to children. If anything, write up to them. Not fancy writing, and of course no long words, but keep your subject elevated, your motive pure. Children's minds are surprisingly sensitive and their judgments keen. They soon feel a sense of superiority in their authors, feel and resent it. "Pooh," they say, "I don't like Samuel Stiltem's stories; he thinks he knows too much."

Indeed, it often happens that an

author dare say things to children that he or she would hesitate to put into a story for grown-ups; thoughts and ideals too tender, too cherished to risk before the eyes and opinion of a possible cynic. Whatever children are, they are never cynics.

To write a best-seller must give an author a generous, well-earned thrill. But does it equal that thrill which comes when a confiding eager child tucks itself up on your lap with a quick, "Tell me a story, please", with utter confidence that the story will please.

And there is such a wide field for children's stories, from the well-loved and still much-trod ground of fairy tales, to stories of great people, characters from history, present life and fiction. If in telling stories of heroes you can give their lives and actions the child-slant, make their accomplishments wonderful from the child point of view, you have succeeded in planting those names ineradicably in the minds of your juvenile readers.

Why are fairy stories so long remembered? Because they are presented to a child's understanding; not childishly presented, but from the clear, unprejudiced standpoint of a child's mind.

Take "Alice in Wonderland", that most perfect book of nonsense ever written, for child or grown-up alike. No one has ever succeeded in imitating it, try they ever so hard. It is a bit of pure spontaneity.

Perhaps that is one of the secrets of writing successfully for children? The spontaneity of treatment. Children are as quick to feel affectation of style as superiority in an author. They dislike that Now-children-here-we-are-all-together-aren't-we-going-to-have-a wonderful-time attitude in a story teller. With the average child readers it is always and entirely up to the story-teller himself whether they have that wonderful time or not. They have no intention of contributing to it, just because they are "all together".

Another requirement that children make is that the author take his subject seriously. By this I do not mean a lack of humor; far from it. Children love to laugh as much as, if not more than, the biggest and oldest of us. But they demand something to laugh at. Put your characters into a ridiculous predicament, and say—or infer—"Isn't this a funny situation, children? Laugh at it", you'll never get a smile. But put your characters into that same predicament—for example, the Pool of Tears, in "Alice in Wonderland"—and treat it as a real situation, a real predicament, and there you are.

Children are quick to feel the ridiculous, and the more serious you are about it, the funnier it will strike them.

Before the Bed-Time Stories were created, a series of stories was published for little children which had, to my mind, great charm. "Series", however, is not the right word to use, as we now understand books for children, for the stories were not about the same set of ani-

mals, although occasionally the same characters did figure in different books. I refer to Beatrix Potter's booklets about Peter Rabbit, Benjamin Bunny, and others. Among the favorites of these books, still on my grown-up children's shelves, are "The Tailor of Gloucester", "The Tale of Two Bad Mice", "The Pie and the Patty-Pan", and others.

These stories take animals and treat them as human beings, with their trials and joys, their naughtinesses and heroisms; and the smaller the animal, the more genuine his or her trials and joys.

From reading these stories to the children I learned them almost by heart, and enjoyed them. The most perfect gem of them all, to my mind, was "The Pie and the Patty-Pan." May I quote from it to expound my theory? It begins in true story-book fashion with—

"Once upon a time there was a pussy-cat called Ribby, who invited a little dog called Duchess, to tea."

There you have your whole situation in a nutshell. Could any opening paragraph be more complete? You know your characters' names, their genus, and more or less what the situation is to be.

Ribby's letter of invitation to Duchess, assuring her that the contents of the pink-and-white pie dish are to be delicious, raises a certain anxiety in the little dog's mind, so in her acceptance Duchess puts a postscript, "I hope it isn't mouse", and then realizing that that was not quite polite (every little girl reader would appreciate that touch!) changes the sentence. But the anxiety remains. Duchess knows that to Ribby nothing could be more delicious than mouse pie, but Duchess's little-dog soul shudders at the thought. Could she eat mouse pie, even to be polite at a party?

Now, Duchess herself was to have had a pie in a pink-and-white dish; it was all ready to go into the oven. And, as it happened, she had planned to invite Ribby to share it. Duchess's pie was to have been veal and ham, quite her favorite dish. She yields to temptation and running to Ribby's house during the pussy's absence, pops her pie into Ribby's oven. She does not know that there are two ovens to the stove, and uses the lower. When the time comes, Ribby puts her own pie (composed, as the little dog had feared, of minced mouse) into the upper oven and tidies her house for her guest in the most approved fashion.

The story moves on. Duchess thinks it is her pie that has been served, and enjoys it immensely, until at the last helping she has a fright. In making her veal and ham pie, Duchess has put into the middle of it a tin "patty pan" with scalloped edges, to hold up the pie crust. This patty pan cannot be found, and in spite of Ribby's repeated assurances that she had not used a patty-pan, Duchess is in a great fright, believing that she has swallowed the sharp tin thing. Kind Ribby runs for Dr. Magpie, and while she is gone, Duchess hears something sizzle, and to her dis-

may, discovers her veal and ham pie, just where she had put it, brown and savory!

She has eaten of the mouse pie, after all! But the present problem is how to get rid of her own pie before Ribby returns? Hurriedly Duchess sets the pink-and-white dish with its delectable contents outside the kitchen door, resolved to return for it. Dr. Pie, scoffing and jeering, accompanies Ribby home, ministers to Duchess, and she is so promptly cured that she refuses Ribby's escort home. As soon as Ribby closes her door on her departing guest, Duchess turns and slips around the back way, only to find, as she deserves, that the magpie and his friends are supping gayly on the veal and ham pie.

Later Ribby, coming out for fresh water to wash up her party dishes, finds a broken pink-and-white pie dish and a large tin patty pan. Poor, dear Ribby's feelings are hurt, and she resolves that next time she gives a party, she will invite one of her own kind, Cousin Pussy Tabitha.

This story carries keen human interest from start to finish, with the undercurrent of humor always felt by children, and always, at least, among those children with whom I have talked and played, thoroughly enjoyed.

Yet I have read "Things required" and "Don'ts" from many and many a child's magazine that warn one against personifying animals. I wonder why? What can be the publishers' prejudice against it when the most successful children's books in the world have been just that: "Alice in Wonderland", the "Jungle Books", "Wind in the Willows", and others.

Perhaps it is the same trend of mind that does not believe in letting children cling to the myth of Santa Claus. That, too, depends entirely upon the treatment. If parents let their children think that a flesh-and-blood, fat little man comes down the chimney each year to bring them everything they want, a time of explanation and bitter unbelief is bound to come. But if Santa Claus is made "a spirit of Christmas" faith in him can live always. My own children carried the thought still farther. Asked the direct question, "Mother, is there a Santa Claus?" I began, "There is a spirit of Christmas that—" when my little girl took the answer out of my mouth with: "I see. Once there was a man so good, and who loved so to give children pretty things, that after he died, God 'lows him to come down still on Christmas to give presents." And I let it go at that.

Children's minds are free, their imaginations unfettered, and their natural instincts simple. Haven't you observed that truly great people are always men and women of imagination, vision, and of simple tastes? They have kept their minds unspoiled, their imaginations unfettered.

Put your story before your child readers as a real thing and they will accept it. They have no realities of life, no disappointments nor disillusions, to dash them. Keep all sophistication out of your children's stories, and all condescen-

sion.

The natural human mind is one of imagination, enterprise and a healthy curiosity. If one can keep these attributes in one's consciousness one can scarcely fail, it seems to me, to write successful stories for children.

The Question of Plagiarism

Archie Joscelyn

Doubtless When King Solomon was Editing the Proverbs He Cogitated on the Question that Has Confronted Editors Ever Since

AUTHORS are always more or less concerned with the subject of plagiarism. Of late it has been given undue prominence in such cases as the suit brought against Fannie Hurst, and the German accusations against Edgar Rice Burroughs. But the playwright, of all classes of authors, seems to suffer most, as in the case of Channing Pollock.

There are always two fears for the average writer: First, that he may have his work stolen, though this is of much less importance than is sometimes thought. Second, that he may be accused of stealing the writings of someone else. And here, if one attains to any degree of fame, seems to lie a more or less real danger—though this is often exaggerated, as I shall attempt to show later.

Perhaps the young author has more fears on the subject than anyone else—largely groundless fears, of course, but very real nevertheless. He does not understand the subject very well, and, having learned that there were only thirty-six plots to start with, and all these having been used countless thousands of times, he is afraid of being accused of plagiarizing the work of someone else, and having his whole career blackened.

He may set his fears at rest. The only generally-accepted meaning of the term "plagiarism", among professional editors and authors, nowadays, is where deliberate theft is indulged in—the copying of another's work with only slight changes. Any ambitious writer of course stays as far as possible from even the appearance of such a thing, so in the end he has little to worry about.

Assuming the unassumable, that there are but thirty-six situations to start with, it is inevitable that most stories will be similar in many respects, and that some will be very much alike from beginning to end, even when written by authors who have never heard of each other, and have had no possible opportunity to copy from each other. The chances are good that they both have the same fundamental source of in-

spiration. Perhaps they are both re-writing somebody else's story—a story that they have read, forgotten, but unconsciously retained. It happens every day. The resultant new story is akin to the old, yet it is new with the personality of the new writer. Probably it is akin to a thousand stories—yet different from them all.

And again, and this happens just as often, both writers will have indepedent sources of inspiration, and still turn out two stories as alike as two peas in a pod.

People who do not understand how this may be done, are prone to accuse one or the other of plagiarism in such a case. If one chances to be an amateur and the other a professional, and the amateur is lacking in scruples, the professional is apt to be accused of stealing the story from the amateur, and may be subjected to the annoyance of a suit in court.

In such a case, the professional is put to the expense of defending himself. Practically without exception he will be cleared, for professionals never indulge in such practices. They could not afford it if they wanted to, for very quickly all editorial gates would be barred to them. The ambitious amateur who has brought suit, unjustly, has had the rather doubtful satisfaction of being in the public eye for a time, but he has not helped himself the least bit with editors. He may believe that he has blackened the professional with editors and the public, but there again he is sadly at error. Editors know better, and the public does not care one way or another.

There are numerous cases on record, both recent and ancient, of two writers turning out stories that were practically alike all the way through. Being professionals, neither accused the other of stealing from him. Where it was possible, the one author withdrew his story after the other had been published, and cheerfully pocketed his loss. The other fellow had merely cashed in on an idea that was common property, first.

Occasionally two such stories are published at almost the same time, in two different magazines. This does not indicate plagiarism, but the absence of it. It shows, further, how two writers may honestly have similar ideas and express them in much the same manner.

A young writer is likely to be influenced unconsciously by what he has read. His style, unformed as yet, will probably ape that of some favorite author. Editors may remind him of this. But there is no crime in his unconscious imitation. However, his style will not be up to the standard of the famous author, and the chances are also that that writer and his style are out of date. So to that extent the similarity is hurtful to the beginner. But that is nothing to worry about, either, for with faithful practice he will develop a style that is honestly his own.

Probably the majority of stories by new writers are more or less unconscious copies of stories which they have read, and liked—usually in their youth. Their plots, styles and titles will all be molded in an

amateurish manner, on old masterpieces (?). These stories will not, of course, be published, and since every new writer has to go through this stage, again no harm is done.

This all deals primarily with plagiarism as it affects the writer for the magazines. To sum it up, I wish to quote a few meaty words from the pen of Henry Gallup Paine, editor of the Authors' League Bulletin, in the September, 1926, issue.

"A thought having come into a writer's mind, he necessarily has to depend on his memory for the proper words to express it. They may come to him spontaneously, or he may have to hunt around in his mind for them, and then to arrange them in effective sequence. In either case he is equally in danger of having memory slip in to take the place of inspiration. The danger may not be great, but the substitution doubtless takes place more often than it is detected. Not too much importance should be placed upon it when it is detected, especially in the case of a professional writer. (In the case of an amateur writer it is of no importance at all). Unless he does it so often as to become a habit."

The dramatist stands in a more perilous position in regard to plagiarism than does the average writer. Channing Pollock, who has attained sufficient fame to be a good target, affords a notable example. He has been sued a number of times, so much so that he has made it a rule never to look at the manuscript of any play whatever, so that there can be no claim that he has "stolen" the idea from it. In pursuance of this policy, he even finds it necessary to refuse to act as a judge in prize contests.

It is because of the danger that someone will steal an idea, claim it as his own, and then involve the company in a costly suit, that so many movie companies have refused to buy any original photodramas. Copyrighted stories that have been published in magazines are fairly well protected, and the copyright is something that the writer can sell as proof of ownership.

Aside from petty would-be pirates, there is really nothing to worry about in the question of plagiarism. And such pirates can best be stamped out through a general knowledge of what their despicable efforts really mean.

The public judgment will correct false reasonings and opinions, and no other definite line can be drawn between the inestimable liberty of the press and its demoralizing licentiousness. If there be still improprieties which this rule could not restrain, its supplement must be sought in the censorship of public opinion.—THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Confessions of An "Ad" Man

Alex W. Brenizer

This Is Not as Spicy as It Sounds, Yet Its Revelations May Prove the Turning Point in Many a Career

I AM only one of thousands of advertising writers whose pens extol the merits of sheep-lined coats, corduroy bathrobes, aluminum percolators—and a whole department-store-full of sundry commodities—by day, devoting my nights to "The Great American Novel."

F. Scott Fitzgerald kept the wolf from gnawing his manuscripts by writing advertisements until he "arrived." One of the most successful, if not the best known of living playwrights, Otto Harbach, wrote advertisements before he wrote successful plays.

As a grub-stake—bread and butter, if you please—for the beginning writer, the writing of advertisements is ideal. Manuscripts may come and manuscripts may go, but the "ad" writer's pay comes just as regularly as he (or she) chooses to work. Besides the profit there is in it, the writing of advertisements means getting one's stories across to one's readers! It means presenting interestingly and forcefully the facts about furniture, wearing apparel, garden tools, and all the rest. And there is scarcely a town wherein profitable part-time employment may not be had in writing publicity matter for the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker.

I do not make the claim that after writing a few masterful publicity sketches on the merits of a commercial substitute for good old-fashioned "hog's lard" that the tyro will be ready to write a Best Seller, but as the result of writing advertisements such terms as Brevity, Force, Specific, Clear—as applied to writing—by and by become practical accomplishments of even the novice.

The discipline of writing advertisements is severe. It is primarily a cold-blooded commercial proposition. The copy-writer must turn out his daily quota of material—material of a high standard—whether his head aches or not. He cannot walk up to the "boss" and say, "Look here, big Boy! I sat up till two o'clock this morning, working on my next story. I've got a beastly headache—nervous as a cat. Think I'll knock off for the day!"

No. The seasoned copy-writer says nothing of the kind. He knows that his particular material has to be rushed to the printer while it is still warm. So he grits his teeth,

cudgels his brain and—produces! And do not our really successful writers of fiction do the same? This is the point I want to make. The really successful writer, whether his subject be baking powder or one of the much-vaunted thirty-six dramatic situations, writes and *writes!* He doesn't sit and wait until he is feeling one hundred per cent free from physical and mental blemishes. Writing is his sole object in life. So he writes! And if you have trouble to keep your typewriter grinding away steadily, except when you *feel* like writing, your production is certainly suffering. A period of service in an advertising agency, or, in the case of one living in a small town, taking charge of the advertising of one or two stores, will certainly get the notion out of your head that daily production is dependent on the feelings.

I owe the sale of my first story to three highly important things. First, to a magazine for writers, which inspired me—spurred me on —to write. Second, to a story-writing course, which taught me how *not* to write. Third, to the bull-dog tenacity of never giving up that I have begun to acquire after several years of writing advertisements for exacting merchants.

I have labored conscientiously a whole forenoon on an advertisement — labored until my head ached—only to have that arch-vandal, the "boss," come along and destroy my brain child before my burning, overworked eyes! Oh, yes, "ad" writers have "brain children" too! To hold an advertising position for one brief year is to gain a fund of knowledge, a wealth of practical experience and a strength of character of inestimable value to the ambitious young writer.

I should not want to be guilty of laying so much as a straw in the path of a fellow student-writer, but from my own experience I want to offer a few suggestions. To the beginning writer, who finds that he is not progressing so rapidly toward authorship as seems to justify his efforts, while working at some such mundane occupation as, say, operating a street car, why not switch to advertisement writing? No, no, Charley! Don't give up your job right away. But if your Company advertises, study the advertising. Look for weak points. Write a few "practice" advertisements of your own. Then write a "real" one and slip it to the man in charge of publicity. And if your Company doesn't advertise, write a few advertisements for it anyway. When you just can't "think of a thing to write about," sit down and write an advertisement. You'll be surprised how quickly the ideas will begin to flow.

Even if you do not feel inclined to take up the writing of advertisements for a living—until your pen becomes profitable in your chosen line of writing—you'll find it an excellent hobby. It will at least afford you an ever-present subject, as many-sided and complex as life itself. And when you have sat for an hour with your pencil poised over a sheet of paper, your brain

refusing to function, what a relief to know you can go ahead and dash off a forceful, convincing, simple sales-talk on washing machines!

"But," someone objects, "I don't know a thing about washing machines!" And that is just the reason I have taken such pains to recommend advertisement-writing to the aspiring writer. "I don't know" is inexcusable. And "ad" writing will not permit of guesswork. It teaches the beginner to go and find out all the facts concerning an article of merchandise before writing a word about it. What rapid strides the beginning-writer of fiction would make if he would only stop guessing! That is why he should serve an apprenticeship in some branch of the "ad" writing profession. Then research and first-hand study would become second nature to him.

How often have all of us sat and speculated on how to get around some important bit of description, instead of getting the facts in the case. If our hero was an iron molder, did we familiarize our minds with his trade, or just speculate? If he was a locomotive engineer, did we learn the names of anything else about a locomotive besides the throttle and the whistle-cord? Or did we just "leave it go at that"?

Brother writers-in-the-making, if you cannot serve on the news-gathering staff of a daily paper, then the advertising field offers you the next best apprenticeship. But if neither of these vocations is available for you, do not despair; for when all is said it is the *principles* adhered to by the successful reporter and the successful "ad" writer that make for success in every other branch of the writing profession. And, thank Heaven, these principles are as free as the air you breathe! "Ad" writing and reporting for newspapers are not necessities, they are advantages. The writer who has never had the advantages offered by either of these branches of writing is very apt not to work hard enough.

One of the greatest lessons of my life I learned from my father. Little did he dream how much his simple words of homely wisdom were to help me in all of my undertakings.

One day I was proudly cultivating a field of corn. I was twelve years old and using a one-horse "spider"—a three-pronged plough, requiring a "round" to the row—up one side of a row of corn and down the other. After I had been cultivating for a couple of hours, Father came over to the field to inspect my work. He found a good many weeds in the corn I had gone over, so he took the cultivator and demonstrated to me that one could literally "hoe" the corn with it. As he turned to go he said: "Do it right, now—and when you get older you won't know any better!"

In conclusion, let me add that the "Ad" man's principle of success is simply hard work. So, work hard now, fellow writers, and when you become successful "you won't know any better."

Putting the Topic Into the Illustrated Article

Catherine Beach Ely

A Fresh Discussion of a Subject of Great Practical Value to Magazine Contributors

ILLUSTRATED topical articles offer almost inexhaustible opportunities for writers who desire to adapt to the popular taste subjects hinging on science, art, business enterprise, local affairs or class occupations. The writer of a topical article not only chooses a subject, but he develops his chosen subject from an angle of present-day interest, and makes it appeal to readers concerned with that particular phase of the subject. Besides the article may be written around photographs carefully chosen to play up the topic which the writer wishes to illuminate by word and visual image.

My own experience demonstrates the varied topics that a single subject yields. Art is one of my favorite subjects for illustrated topical articles. I choose a popular or practical aspect of an art-subject, adjust the manuscript to suit the likings of a certain magazine or class of magazines, and illustrate it with reproductions of famous paintings.

"Lovers in Great Paintings", an article that landed promptly with a well-known weekly of the home-business-political type, at five cents a word, followed the foregoing plan. Youthful lovers of different nationalities, was my topic, illustrated with reproductions of paintings by famous artists of romantic youthful pairs, and containing crisp little characterizations of the artists and their work.

An article on "Moods in Picturesque Houses", illustrated by reproductions in 8 x 10 size, of paintings by famous artists, sold to a magazine of the house-and-garden class for fifty dollars. This article had a somewhat stronger infusion of the art element than had the former articles, but the topic carried practical suggestions for artistic homes to suit people of varied tastes and temperaments.

"Changing Fashions" was my topic in a series of four articles on period styles for men and women from the 18th to the 20th centuries. It was illustrated with many photographs (glossy prints) of puppets dressed in historical costumes, and of famous paintings showing costumes of the different periods. I sold the series at two cents a word to a business magazine which is read mostly by men.

Descriptions of four stages in the

life of Christ—his childhood, early manhood, ministry and last days on earth—which I wrote around reproductions of paintings by Andrea del Sarto, van Dyke, Rembrandt, and Rogier van der Weyden, found a home in the Christmas number of a leading religious periodical.

A magazine for young people published my "Young Folks Whom Great Artists have Painted", and "Following the Trail with American Artists"; both articles were illustrated with photographs of paintings appropriate to the topic. My article about national dances in famous paintings appeared in a dance magazine, with reproductions from great artists' paintings showing dancers of Spain, Holland, classic Greece, Colonial America, and among the American Indians.

"Great Paintings of Home Life" I placed with a popular health magazine. Among the paintings reproduced as illustrations for the article were those by the famous American artists, Max Bohm and Mary Cassatt, both of them master-interpreters of healthy children in the home, which was my topic—one which carries an art appeal, a home appeal and a health appeal. A farm magazine paid me a good price for my article, "Paintings inspired by Cattle".

In all these articles art was my subject, out of which I developed such widely differing topics as: national types of lovers; planning artistic homes; stages in the life of Christ; adventure for young people; national dances; cattle in France, Holland and Germany; wholesome home life for children.

The art appeal should not be made too prominent for popular reading, in articles of this sort, but subordinated to a practical topic, or one with a universal appeal, and made a contribution to modern living. The reference to the artist and his life-work should be woven in briefly and informatively. Perhaps it requires as much art-background and familiarity with paintings to write a popular article with a flavor of art as it does to spin out a long encyclopedic dissertation on art.

If you do not care to base your topical article on famous paintings, you may write topical articles around illustrated features of your own city, town or section of country. With a camera you may tour the city streets or rural regions for picturesque and historical old houses, or other aspects of architecture, life, or even business. Brief descriptions of them, playing up some significant feature and illustrated by good photographs, may sell to the magazine section of a newspaper, if the theme is especially timely; or, if the theme offers practical suggestions, to a class magazine; or, if the appeal is universal, to a popular magazine.

On my last summer vacation I noticed the artistic little garages of many rural homes. An illustrated write-up on small attractive home garages might please the automobile magazines. Subjects are common almost everywhere—the difficult thing is to see the topic in or behind the subject, to display a facet of the subject which best

catches the light of timely or popular interest.

A woman of my acquaintance has specialized for years in photographing trees of unusual beauty, odd shapes or historical associations, but has never attempted to find any topics in her collection of photographs. I feel certain that a study of them would reveal topics suitable for articles with nature-study, home-planning, or local and familiar interest, not to speak of articles with a practical photographic slant. Your camera will help you to place topical articles on various features of the countryside, if your information is accurate and your descriptions vivid—and if you find a topic. A topical article must present a topic—some occupational or popular angle of treatment. It will not be topical unless descriptions and photographs concentrate on a salient aspect of the subject.

In considering a topic I ask myself, "Does it appeal to a magazine for general reading or to a class magazine? Does it appeal to magazines which pay well for material? How can I adapt it to the particular slant of the magazine or group of magazines which I have in mind?" Before beginning the article I look through my "Where and How to Sell Manuscripts" and make a list of the possible markets likely to be interested in that topic, in the order of their desirabliity. I sometimes discover that I have a one-market topic, which may or may not be worth developing after I have investigated the desirableness of the market and the prospect of being able to capture it.

The descriptions of the pictures I try to make breezy and graphic, and when the occasion justifies it, humorous, in their presentation of the topic. The captions for the photographs may be inserted as a part of the article, with corresponding figures or letters on the photographs to identify them; they may be written on pages separate from the article, or on slips pasted on the backs of the photos, or inscribed directly on the backs of the prints, if the the writing is not so heavy as to show through.

A topical article which misses fire with a popular magazine I sometimes adapt to a class or trade magazine; frequently I make a class or trade magazine the first market on my list, when I am familiar with its policies. Many trade magazines like illustrated material and offer an extensive field for topical articles with photographs, but the article must be very practical, or else be so written that the editor accepts it as a dessert for his more technical menu. I sold an illustrated article—"Quaint Journeys"—to a railroad magazine, and one on "Fatal Necklaces in Literature" to a jewelry magazine. In some way the topic must be pertinent to the special subject on which the magazine focuses—there must be some connection of interest.

Illustrated topical articles promise definite rewards for one who knows the markets and can adapt his material to the slant of the magazine which he selects as his goal. If art is your specialty, you

may hinge your theme on famous paintings. If science or mechanics is your main interest, information along these lines could be presented under popular topics, frequently with action pictures. If you are more at home outdoors than in the art-galleries or the laboratory, take a camera and scour your neighborhood by trolley, auto or afoot for topics which appeal to the popular taste or to business enterprise. But remember that what you are really hunting is the topic that is hiding behind the things you encounter.

Magazine Types

Frank H. Williams

A Trend of the Times and How the Alert Writer May Capitalize It

THIS is surely the day of specialized magazines. There are publications devoted entirely to adventure, others devoted exclusively to love, still others containing nothing but sexy marriage stories, and so on down the whole line of publications appearing month after month on the newsstands.

Types—that is what present-day magazines are. Every successful magazine of the moment is a type of some sort of individual.

Have you ever thought of magazines in that way?

It helps tremendously, some successful fiction writers tell me, to consider magazines from this angle. It helps because it is illuminating. It sheds a bright light on the sort of material that the publications will buy, and this, in turn, helps the writer in producing the sort of material that will sell to the publication for which it is best fitted.

Look over some of the leading publications and see how easily they fall into types.

There's the Saturday Evening Post, for instance. Every ambitious writer is anxious, I suppose, to land with a loud reverberating bang into the S. E. P. But of what sort of type is The Post? Think it over, study the material this weekly publishes and see if the magazine doesn't call to mind this sort of individual:

Successful, fairly young, alert, well groomed American business man, absolutely up-to-date, deeply interested in the things of the world, a decent golf player, and something of a "wise cracker". A man who is ambitious, who is more interested in the things of this world than in the world to come, a member of lodges and lunch clubs, an owner of an automobile and a house and lot, and a go-getter in either a small way or a big way.

Consider the sort of reading matter that will appeal to such a man.

It must have snap and "go" to it, mustn't it? It must be more or less informative, mustn't it? And, above all things, it must get somewhere and not simply amble all over the lot.

Consider, too, the Cosmopolitan. What type of individual is called to mind by this famous publication? Perhaps this sort of person:

A man or woman who is at least comfortably supplied with money. A person who isn't deeply shocked when people drink. One who is familiar with country clubs, good hotels, fine cars, good clothes and all that sort of thing.

Look at Breezy Stories. What type is called to mind by this publication?

Isn't it a woman who, in some way, has been cheated out of the best of life? A woman who has had a tough time of it physically, spiritually, mentally? A woman who has, perhaps, thought of making one grand break away from the sordid, disagreeable conditions of her life and who, by reason of this desire, is intensely interested in the lives and experiences of other women who have suffered like her and who have made the break or who, in some way, have gotten some of the things out of life that she wants to get?

Then The Argosy-Allstory. Here is represented a type of person who hasn't all the money in the world—the magazine sells for ten cents, you know—a person who knows what it is to take his old flivver for a week's camping trip and spend the nights out under the stars; one of the great common run of America, the folks who are so often held up as being the backbone of the country.

And look at Liberty. Instantly there comes to mind the thought of youth—youthful parents, young children, dance-lovers, movie-goers, folks who attend sporting events, people who are trying in all the ways they know how to get the utmost possible out of life.

Look, too, at The Writer's Monthly. What type does it represent? First of all it brings to mind the thought of ambition—an ambitious person of undetermined age who is anxious to do something worth while in this world, something better than the average person is doing. Next it brings to mind the thought of intelligence. Only intelligent people, for the most part, have the ambition to be writers. Third, it suggests the thought of study. Ambitious, intelligent people who want to be writers are generally students. They study human nature, they study books and magazines, they study the technique of writing. Perhaps they do not spend a great deal of time or effort in such study, but whether consciously or subconsciously they are generally at it, considering material, discarding that which does not seem to be what they want, and classifying types, and all that sort of thing.

Consider all present-day magazines from this angle of types. Notice how practically all of the magazines fall into some definite *personal* class. See how you can hook up each individual magazine with

some sort of person with whom you are familiar.

And then do as so many successful present-day writers are doing—write material that will appeal to the types the magazines represent to you.

Study your material with this thought in mind all the time—that's what many successful writers are doing. Suppose that you were reading your story to a man of the Saturday Evening Post type, for instance. Be candid with yourself as you consider this proposition—would your story hold the interest of such a man? Would your story get his enthusiastic approbation? Would it make him get up and shout for more? Or would it make him restless and anxious to get away to the country club? Or would it even put him to sleep?

Consider the story you have thought good enough for the Cosmopolitan. Pick out some individual in your own town who is of the type represented by that magazine. Then suppose that you were reading your story to him or her. How would it be received? Would his face show animated interest? Would she hang almost breathlessly on what you were reading? Or would an appearance of complete boredom come to his face while he looked around eagerly for some mode of escape?

Types—specialized types, that is what the present-day magazines are. Each and every one of them appeals to some specific audience. And each and every one of them runs the sort of material that will make the biggest sort of hit with that audience.

So successful authors write type stories, to a large extent. The Saturday Evening Post writer, for instance, writes stories that would probably not "get over" with the Cosmopolitan. The Cosmopolitan writer writes stories that the Saturday Evening Post would not be likely to publish. The Argosy writer turns out tales that the editors of Breezy Stories would not care to buy and the Breezy Stories writer prepares manuscripts that Cowboy Stories simply could not use.

And there you are.

Surely the big thing today for writers is to give the editors exactly what they want in exactly the way they want it. And what better method of gaining the ability to do this than by considering all magazines as being definite types representing certain specific sorts of individuals, and then turning out copy that would get the active interest of such individuals, if the material was read to them, rather than putting them to sleep?

The man who
Does what he can
With what he has
Where he is
Is successful

—*Kiwanis Chronicle*

Extracting Gold from Sunlight

J. E. Bullard

Not a Visionary Proposal is This Article from the Pen of a Widely Successful Free Lance but it Does Deal with Vision and with Views

IT has been suggested that if automobile accidents become any more frequent every motorist will have to carry a camera to photograph the scene of any accident in which he may be involved. The idea back of this statement, of course, is that the camera takes complete and detailed notes of a scene, leaves nothing out, and does this instantaneously.

As a note-taker of everything that can be seen, there is nothing that can beat a camera. Even after dark, with the aid of flashlight powder it still can be used. For character studies, for settings and for many other things where the note book is often used the camera does quicker, better and more complete work. Hence its value to the writer is becoming more and more evident. If a person is writing articles rather than fiction, then the camera becomes almost a necessity, when suitable illustrations are to be procured. As a matter of fact, the camera will mean the success of many an article that otherwise would not be written, for when a collection of good photographs has been obtained it is an easy matter to write articles around them, and such articles are likely to sell—usually to the first editor to whom they are discreetly submitted.

There are, then, two distinct and separate uses for the camera. One is the taking of notes. The other is the securing of suitable illustrations. Each use requires equipment suited to the purpose, unless one does not feel the necessity of considering the expense—and that person is not now to be considered.

For note-taking the small camera is best for many reasons. For one thing, it is easy to carry; and again, many pictures may be taken at little expense. The first cost of the camera is also low. One may use it very much as he would use a note book and, all things considered, he is likely to find it as cheap as, and much more satisfactory than, a note book used for anything that the camera can record. The note book is then used only for the recording of such things as dialect, interesting facts, and the like. As each picture is said to be the equal of a thousand words, it readily can be seen how much time and effort are saved by using the camera.

In making notes about the personal appearance of a person who is to be used as the basis of a fic-

tional character, it is easy to overlook some point that might be worth having later. The camera does not overlook these points, and by looking at a picture one is quite sure to gain inspiration that he would not gain by studying a note book.

The camera selected for this work, though small, should have a good lens. A great deal of progress has been made during the past few years in lens making, and it is now possible to buy small cameras fitted with lenses that will take fully exposed pictures in dull light. In fact, there is at least one on the market that can be used for snap shots indoors.

A very satisfactory little outfit may be purchased from $25.00 up. It is not a good plan to buy the cheapest camera, because its small lens will prove a handicap when it is important to get good pictures on cloudy days or in places where the light is poor. The larger the lens, the more light passes through it, and the less brilliantly the object has to be illuminated.

I know of a number of writers who make it a practice to carry always with them a little vest-pocket camera. They would probably feel as much at a loss without their camera as they would without their watch.

My own use of the camera is largely for the purpose of procuring illustrations. I write one or more articles around practically every picture that I take. This means that each picture not only serves as several pages of notes I would otherwise have to take but that it also means the sale of an article which, without the picture, ordinarily would not be written.

For this purpose I have found it better to use a larger camera than is necessary when the pictures are used in place of notes. It is true that the small pictures may often be enlarged, and that they serve as fairly satisfactory illustrations. But it is also true that it is not always possible to procure as good illustrative material with the little camera as it is with the larger one.

The first camera I used took a picture 2¼ x 3¼ inches in size. I used this for several years and sold a great many prints as illustrations. Some of the prints were sent in the small size, and some were enlarged. However, there were a good many editors who insisted on having larger prints, so the next camera was post-card size. This is now used for many purposes. I have sold hundreds of prints for illustrating articles, and am still selling prints from negatives taken with this camera. I never go on a trip without taking it along because of the danger of losing some picture I may want, which I would not have time to take with a more bulky camera that could not be brought into use so quickly.

The first camera gave way to the second because I found that there were many pictures I wanted that I could not take satisfactorily with the little one. Exactly the same thing happened in the case of the larger camera. Some editors wanted larger pictures and of a quality that it was hardly possible to pro-

cure with the post-card-size camera, which of course lacked some of the back-and-front adjustments to be found on a view camera. Besides, it was not possible to use more than one lens on the post-card size camera, at least not with any degree of convenience.

This led to the purchase of a view camera and a convertible lens. This camera takes a picture 5 x 7 inches in size, the lens combination has a focus of 8¼ inches, and the single element a focus of about 15 inches.

The advantage of the view camera does not lie so much in the larger size of the picture as in other features. One big advantage is that a single negative can be exposed and developed at once. Another is that one sees on the ground glass when focusing exactly what will appear in the picture. It is much more difficult to "compose" the picture in the view-finder, because it does not show up so well; and besides, it is very small. One of the greatest advantages of the view camera, however, is the fact that the front-and-back adjustments make it possible to cut out foreground that is not needed and get into the picture some things that cannot be taken with a camera without these adjustments. By raising or lowering the front, by sliding it to the right or left, by swinging the back in either the vertical or horizontal plane and tilting the camera to keep the back vertical, it is possible to show on the negative everything one wishes to show and nothing else.

A number of different lenses can also be used. The one I have serves as two. By using the rear element alone it gives me pictures with excellent perspective. The shorter focus of the combination enables me to get pictures which, because it was not possible for me to get back far enough, I could not get with the long focus. As the lenses are mounted on lens boards that can quickly be taken out or put into the camera front, it is an easy matter to change lenses. By using a short-focus lens, window displays may be taken from the sidewalk in front. Other lenses may be bought and used for special purposes. In other words, the view camera will do a great many things that the camera primarily designed for snap-shot work will not do.

This particular view camera I bought second-hand from a camera enthusiast who had just purchased a brand new camera. The lens was one used by a newspaper photographer, which he wished to sell. The total cost of the outfit, including tripod and plate holders, was not much greater than the price new of the post-card camera with the best lens with which that size is fitted. When one wishes to buy a view camera outfit, or any camera in the professional class, it is not a bad idea to visit the photographing department of some newspaper and make inquiries in regard to anything that the photographers may have to sell. These men have to keep up to date with their equipment. New equipment is all the time being developed and this means that many newspaper photographers have cameras and

lenses that they want to sell. These will serve your purpose just as well as equipment that is newer and more expensive. You will not ordinarily have to work under the same disadvantages that a newspaper photographer very frequently meets. Therefore, you are likely to save a good deal of money on equipment if you keep in close touch with photographers of your community.

Starting with a little camera which I used merely as a plaything, writing has led me to make greater and greater use of photography, until now I always carry two cameras with me whenever I start out on a trip for pleasure or for material-gathering. Most pleasure trips do end in material-gathering anyhow. I have built a dark room in my cellar and equipped it with the accessories needed to do my own finishing. This has all been done because I have found it profitable to make sunlight help me to the extent that it will if a camera is used to full advantage.

All of this photographic work is being done merely for the purpose of getting illustrations around which articles may be written. And it is truly surprising how many articles result. There are scores every year that I would not be able to get if I did not have the camera with me. I now make it a general practice to use the camera first and the note book second. It is not by any means difficult on a well-planned and leisurely-driven summer motor trip to accumulate in a day photographs and notes that result in sales mounting to a hundred dollars or more. Without the camera, the resulting sales would amount to only a fraction of this amount. Properly used, sunlight is most assuredly golden.

We Never Know

I spoke a word,
And no one heard,
I wrote a word,
And no one cared,
But after half a score of years
It blossomed in a fragrant deed.
Sowers of seeds unconsciously.
Our hearers are beyond our ken,
Yet all we give may come again,
With usury of joy or pain.
We never know
To what one little word may grow.
See to it, then, that all your seeds
Be such as bring forth noble deeds.

—John Oxenham

Verse That Pays

Jessie Wilder

The Greeting-Card Field is One Regarding Which too Little is Known by Those Who Think of the Magazine as the Only Markets for Verse

ORDINARILY, verse-writers are not well paid, especially if one considers the time, thought, and labor expended. Verse writing for magazines is chiefly for those who have studied form and technique, for high standards are maintained. Besides, the demand is limited and the supply is far in excess of the requirements. The newspapers indeed offer a market, but in relatively few instances is it a profitable one.

Yet there is one channel of verse-writing that has been neglected by most writers of poetry. It is that of writing greeting-card material.

There is a good demand for original sentiments in verse for all occasions, not only in this country but abroad, and the market is broadening every year. Firms that formerly confined their efforts to Christmas and New Year cards have now extended their lines to include Birthday, Easter, Valentine and Mother subjects, and even "every-day" cards for Graduation, Confirmation, Wedding Anniversaries, Congratulations, Birth Announcements, Thank you cards, Bon Voyage, Why don't you write, etc., etc. Some firms also have a market for verses for dinner cards, favors, and bookmarks.

Hundreds of greeting sentiments are being sold every year and thousands of dollars are being earned by those who have taken the time and trouble to study the kind of verses required and to master the form. These greetings are not hard to write, when the simple principles are observed, and assuming that one has the knack of expression.

Each verse must contain a direct greeting—a message from one person to another. Many people write verses that are didactic, or are so filled with flowery language on the meaning of the occasion that the personal message is lost, if not actually absent.

Greetings are not necessarily genuine poetry, although poetical words and phrases are often used. The majority of people who send greeting cards are not poets, but ordinary human beings and want their sentiments expressed in simple, short, clear-cut verse. High-flown sentiments are not wanted, but clear, forceful language that even a child can understand.

The verse must not be a state-

ment of fact, but a direct personal message in the me-to-you attitude. A good sentiment of forthright appeal will find a ready market.

Use short, one- or two-syllabled words, and avoid trite expressions. Avoid making the lines too long, because they must not take up too much room on the design. Six-line and eight-line verses are sometimes used, especially on "every-day" cards, but four-line verses are the most popular.

Many useless and redundant phrases are written in verse offered to the publishers. It should be the aim of the writer to present an idea simply and effectively. For example, you might want to wish that your friend's "ship might come in" this year, and you could express the thought after this manner:

May your Christmas ship on the ocean wide
Be filled with happiness true,
And sail to port this Christmas-tide
With a cargo of joy for you.

This is not poetry, but it appeals to every-day folks as expressing just what they mean to say.

There must be a smooth-flowing rhythm, and good rhyme. If the writer should find it difficult to make good rhymes, a rhyming dictionary can be procured at very small cost. There is one in the little "Blue-book" series sold for five cents.

A good plan is to write out in prose the kind of greeting you would send to a friend in a letter and then transfer it to verse. Simple greetings of this sort often contain such phrases as the following: "good luck," "good fortune," "happiness and good cheer," "best wishes and warmest greetings," and "all gladness, brightness, joy and mirth."

No mention must be made of sorrow, sickness, trouble, pain or worry—everything must be joy, life, laughter and happiness.

Some firms prefer short, snappy, epigrammatic verses, but the majority like those with a mildly humorous twist. If you can write with a light touch, in a slightly humorous vein, without becoming facetious, you will be sure to make a success of your efforts.

You will often come across cards with perfectly inane greetings, some of which are so badly expressed and the rhymes so faulty that you will exclaim, "I could do better than that myself!" Try it. If you can write really good verse you will find a steady market for your product.

Religious sentiments are not wanted. These can be taken from hymns or verses from the Bible used, without buying them from writers.

Juvenile verses with references to Santa Claus, or hanging up stockings, are not much in demand. As a matter of fact, very few cards are sent to children, for the friends who remember them at Christmas time usually send gifts.

A few don'ts may be helpful, and these apply generally, even though you may have seen printed exceptions.

Don't use dialect, or ungrammatical English.

Don't become sentimental or extravagant in warmth of expression.

Don't submit verses without enclosing a return stamped envelope.

Don't submit more than ten or twelve verses at one time.

Don't send the same verse to two publishers at the same time.

Don't ask the editor for a copy of the card on which your verse appears.

The best greetings are those that are universal in character and can be sent from any one person to any other, regardless of age or sex. Any allusion to the latter element would naturally limit the sale.

A greeting sentiment should begin to appeal in the very first line, although, as in the short-story, the "punch" often comes at the end.

Have you ever watched people hunting for Christmas or greeting cards? They will pick up a card, read it, then discard it and pick up another. It is not usually the design that first attracts, but the sentiment. At last they find what they are looking for. Their faces light up, their eyes brighten, and they gather up a number of cards containing the same verse. They are looking for the kind of message containing in verse just what they would like to say themselves but don't know how.

A few firms buy good prose sentiments, but these must be unusually clever and have literary merit. One must study not only the right thing to say but the best way of saying it.

In sending out sentiments to a publisher or editor, have each verse typewritten on separate, uniform pieces of paper about 3 x 5 inches in size, and fastened together merely with a clip at the lower right-hand corner. Place about ten together, forming a small book. This group may contain sentiments for the same occasion, or diversified sentiments may be included under "Novelty". On an outside or top sheet type very plainly your name and address, and a request that the publisher retain the copy he selects and report to you by number—for each slip should be numbered and a copy retained by you, of course. Also state that you are submitting your verses at the usual rate.

In keeping your records, classify your greetings according to season. "C" might stand for Christmas; "B." for Birthday, "E." for Easter, "V." for Valentines and so on. Then number your verses, "C. 21.," "E. 42.," etc.

When you have formed your slips into books you can send two of these, one containing Christmas sentiments (which are always the most popular) and one for either Easter, Birthday, or Every-day, with a stamped return envelope, for a two cent stamp. This costs you only four cents altogether.

Don't think that every verse you write should find a market, for you will often have them returned. Sometimes a firm buys only one sentiment, and many times your offerings come back without a purchase. But don't become discouraged. Your verses may not be the kind that that particular editor is looking for. Or he may be plentifully supplied at that time, or require verses for other occasions. After a while you will, by doing

good work, establish a market for your verses, and then you may get requests from firms for sentiments for special cards.

The rates of pay vary slightly. Some firms pay only twenty-five cents a line. These are few in number and you can soon learn to avoid them. The usual rate is fifty cents a line, which would bring two dollars for a four-line verse, three for six lines and four for eight. Some firms pay two dollars and a half for a verse, no matter what the length.

While the words and sentiment must be simple, yet the writing of greetings is becoming more and more a specialized art, and publishers are demanding higher standards each year. It will pay you to work faithfully. Once you have mastered the knack you will find ideas occurring more and more readily.

Now let me give a few specimen sentiments.

Those with a light touch are sometimes the most effective. This one sold the first time out:

Everybody's happy,
Everybody's gay,
Everybody's wishing you
A happy Christmas day,
Full of joy and laughter,
Full of deep content.
May this Christmas prove to be
The happiest you have spent.

Sometimes one may suggest an idea that can be followed out in the decorative design:

There's a candle in my window
Alight so you may see
How very gay and bright I wish
Your Christmas-tide to be

Or this one:

Three candles I burn today for you,
One for the days long past,
The next for present happiness,
The third that it may last.

Notice the simplicity of the words in all these verses. I want to repeat the caution not to allow yourself to get too sentimental or emotional. The cards that most people purchase are sent to ordinary friends or acquaintances. Very few like to send the "mushy" sentiments one finds in popular songs. Avoid such expressions as "Your dark eyes", "golden hair", and similar details. They do not apply to everybody and consequently would limit the sales.

As I advised when giving suggestions on marketing, be sure to keep a duplicate or the original copy of each verse you send out. They are sometimes lost in the mail. But don't be afraid that anyone is going to steal your verses. Editors are gentlemen—or ladies. They are willing to pay for anything they intend to use. Otherwise their firms could not remain in business.

Verses may be prepared and sent out at any season of the year. The Christmas lines of cards are made up in January and February, and all cards are ready for the market months ahead, for they must be in the sample-books of salesmen long before they are wanted by the public. Most firms will purchase a good sentiment at any time.

List "every-day" cards under "Novelty Greetings". There is an increasing demand for Bon Voyage cards. I was asked by a firm

to submit some before I had added them to my line. They took seven out of the ten submitted. Here is a sample:

Fair winds, bright skies, and a smiling set,
A spirit strong and gay and free,
New scenes, new life a fine sojourn,
Good health and strength, and a safe return.

Another popular theme is the Why-don't-you-write? sentiment. This is a verse that sold easily:

Why don't you write? It almost seems
As if I'd known you only in dreams.
I dreamt I had a card from you,
Why don't you make that dream come true?

I have been asked quite often for a verse for a book-mark. Here is one:

Whenever you look
Inside this book,
Place me within it too,
So that in case
You lose your place
I'll find the page for you.

When you have learned to write in simple words of one syllable, with a fresh, appealing idea back of each verse, you will find a sure and steady market. Some writers make hundreds of dollars a year in greetings alone as a side line. I know of no other form of verse that pays so well for the average poet. To sum up, the important thing in writing greetings is to make them greetings, and nothing else. All publishers are on the lookout for new ideas brightly expressed. But they are particular as to meter, form and thought.

The following is a list of greeting-card firms that are in the market for verses for all occasions.

Buzza Art Co., Minneapolis, Minn.
Clark Co., Chas. S., 218 W. 40th St., New York.
Cincinnati Art Pub. Co., Cincinnati, Ohio.
Davis Co., A. M., 530 Atlantic Ave., Boston.
Dittmar Engraving Corp., 814 Walnut St., Philadelphia.
Dreyfus Art Co., 514 Broadway, New York.
Dupuis, Rickman & Co., 422 So. Dearborn St., Chicago.
Durant, Hertzog Co., 1129 E. 43rd St., Chicago.
Goodman Engraving Co., 51 Franklin St., Boston.
Henderson Lithographic Co., Norwood, Cincinnati, Ohio.
Holmes Co., 161 W. Harrison St., Chicago.
Gibson Art Co., 200 Fifth Ave., New York.
Keating Card Co., 9th & Samson Sts., Philadelphia.
Leubrie & Elkus Co., 11 W. 19th St., New York.
Le Mai Line, 388 Bowdoin St., Boston.
New England Art Co., 22 W. 18th St., New York.
Norcross Co., 5th Ave., New York.
Owen Card Pub. Co., Elmira, New York.
Perl Art Co., 1129 E. 43rd St., Chicago.
Roberts Studio, The, Arden, Delaware.
Rose Co., The, 22nd & Arch Sts., Philadelphia.
Rustcraft Shop, 1000 Washington St., Boston.
Sanford Co., Dansville, N. Y.
Stanley Mfg. Co., Dayton, Ohio.
Superior Greeting Card Co., 122 Arch St., Philadelphia.
Stauder Engraving Co., 231 No. Wells St., Chicago.
Thompson-Smith Co., 55 Fifth Ave., New York.
Volland Co., P. F., Joliet, Ill.

Lessons from Another Art

Two Musicians Draw Some Interesting Comparisons and Make Some Contrasts of Value to Writers

A Singer Talks to Writers

A. Owen Penny

NOT a great singer am I. Outside of my own city I am unknown, unless it be to a certain section of the radio audience.

I have a feeling, though, that you writers and we singers have much in common in our aims and in our struggles to achieve those aims. We both seek an avenue of self-expression. We both seek to please our public. The great problem for both of us is, How? How to master the technique that will enable us to liberate whatever we may have within us?

In your craft magazines I have noticed with much interests the oft-repeated statement that facility in writing is only to be won by hard, persistent effort. Why do you say this so often and with such emphasis? Is it because beginning-writers have the idea that they can leap into print without an apprenticeship? A singer can not do it. I do not believe a writer can.

I began the study of singing at the age of nineteen, and sang the simplest exercises for three months, without ever looking at a song. An entire year was given to study before my teacher permitted me to enter a church choir. Now I have been singing for twenty-five years in church, oratorio and concert, and I am only today coming to what I call real mastery of my art.

The writer's problem splits up into many small problems. So does the singer's. You have word-values to master, a style to acquire, plots to find, complications to invent, emotional effects to produce, and character-traits to dramatize. These are the materials of your art, are they not? to control which is the object of your study. You cannot do it without the same long, careful thought and practice that we warblers are compelled to go through.

The singer has first to secure poise. This is absolutely essential, for there must be no forcing, no strain, no effort. To me it was, and still is, the most difficult of all tasks. The next aim is to "place" the tone and support it so that it shall have power, brilliancy and expressiveness. The student works to secure perfect breath-control, to deliver the breath to the vocal bands in just the right amount so that the tone will float right on top

of the column of air as a rubber ball rests on the top of a tiny stream of water in a fountain. To do this there must be complete freedom, yet perfect co-ordination of neck, shoulders, chest and diaphragm. I have sung a single tone fifty times in order to secure this co-ordination and give the tone the sonority and roundness it ought to have.

All this merely to *get ready* to sing. Interpretation, diction, phrasing, what not must come afterwards.

Think you that this is acquired over night? And once acquired, have you an idea that it stays with the singer without further effort? Not at all. Those beautiful gradations of volume, those exquisite shadings of tone-color, the smooth, graceful transitions from one note to another which the singer executes "so easily", all are won only by hours, months, years of unremitting toil. And once gained, work and more work is required to keep oneself in condition. For we cannot afford to get out of the *habit* of correct singing. We have to vocalize, if only a little, every day. I venture to say that you writers, too, if you do not write something virtually every day, speedily lose control of your medium.

Regular cold blooded practice, then, seems to be the price that you and I must pay for whatever we achieve. No doubt the most difficult question for you is that of time, especially if you are still dependent upon "a job for your eats." That same obstacle confronts the singer, and he has another one besides that: Where is he going to do his vocalizing without disturbing the neighbors or the other boarders or the school children at their lessons?

Like the writer, the singer can take his tools anywhere. The writer has his pencil and paper, the singer his voice. I can at any time, anywhere, draw in a deep breath and blow softly against the palm of my hand to see how slowly and steadily I can let it out. That is a splendid exercise for the diaphragm. One of my favorite practice-places is the street car. What! Sing on a trolley! Well, of a truth, I don't attempt an aria from "Faust" for the entertainment of the passengers. I simply practice such things as starting a tone very softly and sustaining it to the utmost limit of my breath, watching myself the while to see that I have the proper co-ordination and control. It is astonishing what such odd-time practice will do for one. Many of the most difficult points of vocal technique I have mastered in just this way, and my seat mate, sitting hip to hip with me, has never even heard me or, if he has, has merely thought I was doing a bit of meaningless humming.

It seems to me that writing must require the same amount of work, the same amount of painful drudging over the tiny details of composition. The mind must be trained to see, to observe and think and put the result of all this into words. And this must be done until it becomes a habit.

You can make use of the spare

moments just as the singer does. Suppose you have a half hour on the car morning and evening. With notebook in hand you can drill yourself in narration, description, plot-making and all the other elements of story writing to your everlasting gain.

Of course this is tiresome. It means work. It means the expenditure of energy. And there are periods of discouragement and loss of interest. But that is true of training to swim the Channel. And of trying to make the team. And of building a law practice.

As for me, I am willing to work a lifetime for one day of perfect singing.

Pen and Voice—A Comparison

Sidney Bushell

A BRIEF comparison of style in writing with tone in singing affords, to those interested in both, a fresh and bifocal viewpoint.

The style of the writer, like the timbre of the singer's voice, is something entirely personal. There are no two voices exactly alike, for the quality of the cultivated voice depends upon many things besides training—things mental, physical, metaphysical, physiological and psychological. But underlying this formidable array of terminology is the foundation—the purely personal character of the singer and this is the outcome of his own peculiar life-experience.

Someone has said, "The whole spiritual system, spirit, mind, sense, soul, together with the whole muscular system from feet to head, will be in the wise man's singing, and the whole man will be in the tone."

The writer's style includes all these in greater or lesser degree, with the exception, perhaps, of the purely physical. Whereas the physical make-up of the singer largely determines the fundamental quality of his voice, it does not greatly influence the style of the writer.

Yet, after all, style and tone are all-embracing terms—when their possessor is an artist. Marie Withrow says, "A one-style singer is never an artist." Conversely, neither is a one-tone writer. Songs of different character demand a variety of quality in that "whole man" tone.

And while certain types of songs may especially suit certain individuals, the fact that all types are not suitable may be due as much to circumscribed life and spiritual experience as to lack of flexibility of style. In fact, it is more than probable that one is the reason for the other.

Style in the writer, like the tone of the singer, when an artist directs it, is made to *fit* the subject-matter in hand, whether it be

pathos, drama, humor or clear buffoonery. But it will always be done so artistically as to conceal craftsmanship. The personality and art of the artistic vocalist are submerged in the tonal picture of which he is merely the medium. The style of the writer should be lost sight of in the final portrayal of his idea; and as the singer's tones will be colored and his phrases shaded to suit the sentiment of his song, so will the writer choose words and mold phrases that will, harmoniously and expressively, *fit* the theme he is engaged upon.

Twenty Five Years

Harry L. Piper

A Specialist Free Lance Writes Intimately for the Benefit of His Fellow Craftsmen

TWENTY five years ago today I wrote my first story for pay. I have been at it ever since. There has not been a month, hardly a week, during which I have not written something that got into print, and for which I received pay. Most of the time the writing has been a daily affair.

I wish to celebrate this twenty-fifth anniversary by recording some of the things I have learned about writing for pay during those twenty five years. Maybe I can say something that will be of assistance to some of you writers, readers of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, who have fewer years back of you and many more ahead of you in which to play this great game of turning thought into words, and transmitting the words into dollars. It seems to me that one must be very stupid if he could not, in this writing game, get at least one good new idea a year. That makes twenty five things I must set down in words; twenty five things that may be useful to other writers, especially the younger ones.

* * * * *

Well, I have written down those twenty five things, and if I do not hasten it will be twenty five years and a day since I wrote that first story. After I got seventeen of them set down the traveling got rough, and I came near having to revise my estimate and make it one thing learned every two years. The real trouble was that I have had to unlearn so many things and have had to learn the same things over again so many times. But it has been a day well spent, setting down those twenty five things. It has been good for me to record and classify them. I hope they will not do you any harm. You have heard, perhaps of the minister whose family physician said, "Go gunning, Parson, go gunning. It

will do you a lot of good and it'll not hurt the birds a bit."

But I am not going to tell the whole twenty five just now. It would be too much of a dose to swallow at one time (and I am a little bit doubtful about number eleven, number seventeen and number twenty one). I think that five things will be enough for now. After that, a little encouragement would lead me to name five more some other time. That would have the further advantage of giving me a good bit more time to consider number eleven.

First of all, the things I have learned in the twenty five years is to write for pay only. That sounds mercenary, lacking in the true spirit of art, and perhaps in poor taste. It is none of these things. I have written for nothing, in my earlier days, and I have written for pay of various degrees. I am sure that there is a fundamental difference between the things for which we get nothing and the things for which we get even the smallest payment.

The fundamental difference is this: When you write something and get paid for it, even though the pay be very small, you are reasonably sure that it is good for something; absolutely sure, at least, that some editor thinks it good for something, else he would not have paid for it. On the other hand, when you write something for which you receive no pay, you never know whether it really is any good or not. I have experienced great regret at sending things for free publication, not so much that I needed the money (as I always have!) but because I had not sent it to some editor who would subject it to the acid-test of whether it was worth paying for.

So I say in all sincerity to you younger writers with high hopes and ambitions, you who are glimpsing visions of a great future, send your stories only to those who will pay for them if accepted. It is the only way to keep up a wholesome respect for your chosen work. Moreover, I hope you need the money. It is the best incentive there is in the world to worthy work.

It is a good incentive, also, to what I wish to suggest next in the things I have learned—the value of quantity production. Right here is where I am going to be subject to criticism by those who believe in producing gems of thought that have to be cut and fashioned until they are masterpieces. It is heresy, to them, to suggest the value of producing a lot of copy, of paying more attention to quantity than to quality. It is true that quantity production means paying less attention to details, in spending less time on any one particular piece of writing. But I feel sure that if one hopes to succeed and to earn a living by writing he must produce a mass of copy. It must be flowing out from him pretty nearly all the time. Otherwise he is just playing at being a writer.

I delight in those gems of literature which shine out with immortal light. No one realizes more fully than I that such radiant jewels come only at rare intervals, that

they cannot be produced by wholesale. But greatly as I admire diamonds, opals and sapphires, I know surely that the world has a greater need for clothes—clothes that wear out and are cast aside—than it has for gems which are passed down from generation to generation.

All this day thousands of rumbling presses, all over this land, have been turning out printed words; job presses, newspaper presses, magazine presses, book presses, all turning steadily to produce millions of pamphlets, newspapers, magazines, books which millions of people want badly enough to pay for. They rolled on yesterday; they will be rolling on tomorrow. They will be rolling on when you and I are but a memory. A few hours after a newspaper is printed it is mere waste paper. A week or a month is the life of a magazine. Only a very small number of books live more than a year. Who is to fill this hungry maw, who stoke these mighty furnaces with their incessant demand for more, more, ever more thought turned into words, words turned into print?

The need is going to be met by you and me and thousands of others like us; men and women who work in everyday industry, not in polishing gems. With so short a life ahead of it, in all probability what you and I write need not be the ultra-refined product of the great artist, for I am not now writing to artists. It is for everyday, temporary use, but it should be honestly made; I am not advocating slipshod methods of writing. I am trying to impress you with this tremendous demand for what editors call "good stuff" that will amuse, interest, entertain or instruct their readers for a day or even for a single hour.

To meet this demand, train yourself to write easily, naturally and swiftly. Write as well as you can with the time you have, but don't think that what you are writing is a gem which must be cut and polished for future generations. Press on. Write something every day instead of waiting for inspirations. *Finish* your manuscripts and send them along. Learn to write by writing, not by thinking about writing.

* * * * *

Time passes swiftly. Clouds of the early evening have blown clean away. A half moon shows over the shoulder of the hill. In another hour this anniversary will close. I too must press on.

The third most important thing these years have taught me is the value of having a specialty, of cultivating one field and establishing a name and a reputation in that field. The first time I ever went quail shooting I learned this lesson. A flock arose, burst up from the ground like an exploding shell. The air seemed full of quail. It seemed as if one could blaze away almost anywhere and bring down game. I did just that, and never ruffled a feather. Later I learned to pick out one bird and aim at it. So with writing. Your inheritance, personality, education and experiences have probably fitted you especially for some one line of writing.

Your first job is to find out what this line is, and go at it mightily. Put into it everything you have—your energy, your thought, your ability. In general, I suggest that you choose some field with which you are familiar. It saves an enormous amount of reference work which you would have to do if you were to attempt something in fields not known to you.

I wish to impress you particularly with the necessity for absolute correctness of detail in what you write. You must have this if you expect to write for pay. If you are to produce in quantity there is doubly-great need for this familiarity with the background of what you are writing about. Otherwise you will have to spend hours in study which could more profitably be spent in writing. I have a friend of marked ability as a writer who wants to write about Oregon, simply because he found Oregon and its people new and interesting when he visited there last year. He is downhearted because "editors don't seem a bit interested in Oregon". He forgets that Oregon is not a newly discovered country and that if any editor wants to use something about that state he is more likely to get it from someone who lives there and has had the intimate personal experience which must go ahead of worth-while writing.

My friend would do much better to write about his neighbor, or about the spider that lives under his window-casing.

Take something with which you are familiar. Specialize, but specialize wisely. There are many things that are so very ordinary that it takes a real genius to give them news value. That is just another term for general interest. Remember always that things get printed and paid for only when some editor thinks they are of interest to his readers.

* * * * *

The day draws toward its close. Soon midnight will strike. My Anniversary is almost over and I have set down only three of the five things I set as a goal! The others will have to wait, for there is one thing I must say, and this preachment is too long already:

Write honestly on the everyday-quantity-production-for-pay basis: produce the good homespun clothes that are so greatly needed where so much shoddy is being put out. But now and then, for your soul's sake, take a rough gem of thought and cut and polish it to the last limit of your ability. Forget pay, forget quantity, forget time and space, lose yourself for a little time—that you may, perchance, find yourself. Who knows but you may be one of the immortals?

Some famous partnerships: Ebb & Flow; Stop & Think; Nip & Tuck; Time & Tide; Go Away Back & Sit Down; Such & Such; Down & Out; Black & Blue; Rough & Ready.—*Agenda.*

The House-Organ Field

Lawrence McCracken

The Writer is Assistant Advertising Manager of the Peerless Motor Car Corporation and Editor of their House Organ—Peerless Co-Operator

THROUGH ignorance of its existence, or lack of appreciation of its opportunities, the great majority of writers are ignoring the market waiting for them in the house-organ field. Thousands of these company magazines are being published in the United States. Hardly a business organization of any size in the country can be found that is not publishing one or more of these periodicals.

Yet, manuscripts from outside writers are as rare as red flannels at a New York night club, and appreciated in proportion to their rarity. For more than a year I have been editing a "dealer" magazine for the Peerless Motor Car Corporation. Peerless motor cars are in use in all parts of the United States, yet I have not had one manuscript submitted to me by an outside writer.

In consequence, we are forced to depend practically entirely upon our owners and dealers for our material. "Peerless" owners, unless they are unusually impressed by their car's performance, do not bother to write of their experiences. Dealers, too, see little advantage to themselves in sending us material. Our method of obtaining copy is to interview the dealers and distributors who come to the factory. We find out from them what they are doing in the way of unusual sales "stunts" and window displays. We ask for pictures and other details. Sometimes we get them and sometimes we don't.

It is here that the outside writer could be of value to us and to himself. He knows what is going on in his city. When he sees a Peerless dealer making a striking window display or "pulling a stunt" that is out of the ordinary he could obtain pictures and send us the story. In that way we would get the story without delay and without bother. We can afford to pay well for service of this kind.

When it is remembered that Peerless is but one of thousands of concerns faced with this problem, some idea of the market open to writers can be obtained.

The nature and function of house organs seems to be so little understood that probably an explanation of their divisions is in order. House magazines can be divided into three main classes—

publications for employes, for consumers, and for dealers and salesmen.

The employe publications are designed to develop a better spirit among the factory's workmen. They also give information on accident prevention and serve in other ways to pay their way. Material for these magazines can practically all be obtained at the home office. Consequently they offer relatively little opportunity for the outside writer.

Consumer magazines are designed to win friends for the house and the house's products among the ultimate consumer. Editing of these magazines is one of the most difficult tasks in the field of commercial writing.

Care must be exercised that the magazine does not carry too much advertising, and yet it must pay its way. Editors of these magazines are always grateful for the opportunity to look over outside material. Sometimes these publications buy fiction. Frequently they buy jokes, especially if the joke can be tied up with the company's product in some way. These magazines are of such wide diversity that it is impossible to lay down any rules for the kind of material to be submitted, but the writer is almost always safe in sending a story that describes an unusual use to which the company's product is put or tells of extraordinary service obtained from the product. For example, a fireproof-roofing company would like to know of cases in which a house had been saved from destruction by fire because of use of its roofing; a printing company is interested in unusual returns obtained from use of its printing; and automobile companies like to hear of out-of-the-ordinary service given by one of its cars.

However, the magazines that go to the dealers and salesmen of the company and are designed to promote the company's sales offer probably the largest field for the writer. Editors of these publications are interested in everything that will give their readers greater faith in the article they are selling or will suggest new sales-methods to their dealers.

In the case of an automobile company, the results obtained from a house-to-house canvass by a dealer would make a good story. Scores of other stories suggest themselves to the wide-awake writer, especially those that have had their news instincts quickened by newspaper work.

Because of the unending variety of house organs printed, probably the most practical procedure for the person who wants to tap this source of income is to write to a number of companies and request copies of their house magazines. From these he can obtain suggestions as to the type of material wanted. Or he might keep his eyes open in his city and when he sees something which he believes would be of interest to some special type of company he might write the advertising manager and offer to send the material. In some cases it is probable that the material

would be unusual enough to make advertising copy.

In the automobile business, the company's publicity men are confronted with the necessity of sending out news stories for the newspapers each week. Suggestions for these stories are always welcome. Pictures of prominent persons who are owners of the company's cars, articles about automobiles giving mileage of 10,000 miles or more under conditions that are unfavorable, and similar items that have a certain news value and yet speak well for the car, are suitable for these publicity releases. Most companies will pay liberally for tips of this kind, as these stories are sent broadcast to several thousand newspapers. It must be remembered, though, that to be suitable the stories must have nation-wide interest and be absolutely authentic, giving all essential details.

As in other writing, the writer by study of the field learns the opportunities it offers and can profit more as his knoweldge increases. The purpose of this article is only to suggest that it is worth any writer's time to give this neglected field some of his attention. He will be welcome, and as his knack for turning out articles for house organs increases he will find the returns averaging better than he could obtain from most other fields.

A Dollar Directory

James E. Daugherty

A Dollar-Hint That Will Prove to be Worth Much More

As an antidote for the flood of short-story rejections I recently compiled a "dollar market directory," which is helping me to "pull" editorial checks with flattering frequency.

My dollar directory is a loose-leaf notebook containing the addresses of scores of magazine and newspaper departments that pay a dollar or thereabouts for short contributions. It is a wide field, and I find new potential markets nearly every day.

Simple little farm hints bring a dollar at Capper's, Topeka, Kansas. The Chicago Herald-Examiner buys stories about "cheeky" people, and descriptions of queer weddings. A hundred words describing a good window trim will bring a dollar from Rural Trade, Topeka. Grit, Williamsport, Pa., will take short "editorials" written in the form of personal letters. There are literally hundreds of such markets. I leaf through every new magazine or newspaper I find to see whether it has a department for short contributions; consequently, my dollar directory is growing all the time.

I try to hit some one of these markets every day. A short a day brings constant pay!

Get Out!

Herbert A. Cerwin

Shall the Newspaper Writer Who Wishes to Achieve a Career in Fiction Writing Remain a Daily Journalist?

GET out of it, if you want to write fiction! This is the advice of a number of noted writers and editors to those in the toils of newspaper work who are longing to follow in the footsteps of authors of fiction.

Newspaper work is fascinating; there is no doubt about this, and it is the finest training I can think of for any man, whether he wants to write fiction or sell automobiles. That is, provided he does not remain in the profession for a long period.

Once a newspaper man stays in "the game" for more than two years, ten to one he will remain there until the day he will again turn cub and go on his last beat.

Several reasons account for this fact. There is a mistaken belief among reporters which tends to swell their ego. They are too prone to consider themselves higher than the average man because they can get passes to "shows" and chum around with the police.

There is some truth in their assumption, and the fact is that newspaper men as a whole are more intelligent than those in the business world. What a difference there is between the average successful reporter and a salesman or a bank clerk! It is foolish to attempt to compare the two. A reporter looks at life from a different angle than the average man. He laughs at the world and its people. He knows and sees life as only a few men do. He is usually a good philosopher.

But a reporter is just what the word implies: he reports. He deals with facts and facts only. The author, on the other hand uses his imagination. He puts his inventive faculties to work.

"The worst thing that could happen to newspapers would be if the reporters should exercise their inventive faculties," Paul Cowles, superintendent of the western division of The Associated Press, and one of the men who worked with Melvin E. Stone when the latter founded The Associated Press, told me recently.

"Don't you believe, Mr. Cowles, that newspaper work is a good foundation for authorship?" I inquired.

"Newspaper training is the finest thing in the world," was his reply. "However, those who want to write fiction should not remain in this field for more than two or three years. A reporter deals with

facts and does not use his imagination.

"There is a future in the newspaper game, but it all depends on the man himself. Many wealthy men who are now publishers of newspapers almost without exception started out at the bottom as reporters, printers or office boys. There are just as many opportunities today as there ever were before. Opportunities always keep on coming.

So much for Mr. Cowles. And he is right. Now we come to Stewart Edward White, whose books on outdoor life have made him one of the most famous of living authors, and whose stories appear almost weekly in the Saturday Evening Post.

Mr. White lives in Burlingame, a few miles from San Francisco, where in the secluded hills he has constructed his home and two studios. The first is decorated with a large collection of stuffed wild animals which he has killed in Africa with bow and arrow. The second is his workshop. It is just big enough for a desk, three chairs and a swing. Here, behind locked doors, he writes each morning. He seldom uses a typewriter, writing his manuscript in pencil and then letting his stenographer do the typing.

"Mr. White, do you think newspaper work is a good foundation for writing fiction?" was one of my questions during the course of an interview.

"Yes, it is, so long as the reporter does not stay in it too long. If he does, his writing becomes stereotyped and he loses his creative ability. It is a good foundation, and much can be learned by remaining in it for several years."

His advice to an aspiring writer is to know all the people he can come in contact with, and all phases of life; not because this will teach him to write, but because it will help him to know people and the world.

Mr. White is a staunch supporter of the theory that life supplies the writer with his theme. He was 22 years old when he started out on his career and worked his way around the world for many years until he wrote his first story. He was working in South Dakota when he wrote his first accepted manuscript. He mailed it to a San Francisco periodical, the Argonaut Magazine, and the now famous writer who is paid a high rate per word, received $15 for that first story.

Another famous man who advocates newspaper training for the author, and yet advises him to get out of it, is "Jimmy" Swinnerton, the cartoonist and originator of "Little Jimmy," the comic strip which has become internationally known. Mr. Swinnerton, although he is noted for his cartoon work and paintings, has written a number of short-stories, and is at the present time finishing up a series for Cosmopolitan.

What he says is worth listening to, for he knows life. Mr. Swinnerton started his career on the old San Francisco Examiner. He says: "The belief that writers and artists eventually lose their ideas does not apply to all. An artist

may do his best work after he has been 40 years in the game. It all depends on how he has developed his mind since he was a youngster."

It is true that some writers even after they have been in newspaper work for years have become famous. Irvin S. Cobb is an example, but as in all things, we always find exceptions.

Almost every reporter wants to write. It is the only future he can think of, and he is always hoping to branch out into fiction writing. It is sometimes pitiful to realize that among all the thousands of newspaper folk only a few will climb the ladder of success, which is ascended first by having the ability and second by training and hard work.

The best plan to follow for the reporter who wants to take up fiction would be to quit his job, and then write—Write as much as possible; and if he has any ability it will at least show within a year.

However, if at the end of the year he has not succeeded, it does not necessarily indicate that he has failed. Balzac wrote for years and years before his first story was published. When it was, he wrote to his sister: "I am on the high road to become a genius!" And then a few weeks later she received the triumphant announcement: "I *am* a genius!"

Difficulties will no doubt arise from following the plan just outlined. But out of difficulties great achievements and even miracles grow. Suppose the reporter is married. All right, let him obtain a position doing work only in the morning, or only in the evening. If a job like this cannot be found, he can secure employment in a store as a clerk or a salesman. Then he will have all evening to write.

But if he remains in newspaper work and is, say, employed on an afternoon paper, he quits at 6 o'clock and goes home for dinner. Does he feel like writing a story after he has been doing similar work since 6 o'clock in the morning? No, he is tired and wants to do something different, as is only natural. Here is the principle reason why so few reporters succeed in fiction.

"Because we laugh they think we cannot feel!
Who laugh the deeper feel the deeper too.
What use are tears? Are tears a balm to heal
Another's wounds? Tears are the gentle dew
Of sweet self pity; laughter is the song
Of those who reach to aid, who strike to save.
Tears for the weakling, laughter for the strong;
Tears for the coward, laughter for the brave!"

—ARTHUR GUITERMAN.

From the Brown Owl's Oak

They go on two good legs

Aside from the telling, what makes a story?

Plan to give six nights, from eight to twelve, to reading the stories in a varied lot of current magazines, excluding only those magazines that obviously exclude themselves through feeling little immediate concern about literary quality in what they print—you will still have left an extensive range of choice, running down among popular and even minor publications.

If at the end of the week you are not ready to concede that in the majority of the stories a prime element is some freshness or difference, or individuality or originality, or reality, or significance, of *idea,* the Owl misses his guess.

The sentence and the gob

"Jenks!" The city editor beckoned. Jenks shambled across the room, lank, uncouth, crude—like a cub, indeed, a cub struggling through its first long, foodless hibernation. "Ye-uh?" he half growled. The manner might have been offensive or defensive.

With repressed impatience, the c. e. was tapping pencil-top on a sheet of much edited copy—Jenks's. When he stopped, the pencil-point instinctively poised itself above the sheet, ready. Under dully drooping lids, Jenks's eyes fixed themselves on it rather than on the editor's face.

"Jenks, what *is* a sentence?"

The eyes continued fixed on the competently poised pencil. The drooping lids lowered a bit more.

"Do you know?"

The big mouth, tightening, lengthened athwart the narrow face as if its ends were being drawn by rubber bands hitched to the outthrusting ears. The features were a stage-mask—a comedy-mask with perhaps the lines of a tragedy-mask. Something in the slow grimace made the editor realize that underneath its grotesqueness the mouth was sensitive. The brittleness disappeared from his tone.

"Well?"

"I — why, I learned it once in the grammar, but I do' know as I can tell it."

The editor's persistent silence forced him to say more.

" 'T always seemed to me grammar sentences are mostly a gob of words. 'T never seemed to me to be much sense."

Still his interrogator kept si-

lence. The young man closed his eyes, and swallowed—in the thin neck the lump of Adam's-apple jumped convulsively.

"When you got something to say," he blurted desperately, "you go ahead an' say it. You don't stop an' bother about sentences."

The c. e. turned to the window. His pencil-top began to tap the copy again—slowly. Again the young man closed his eyes and swallowed and the apple jumped. When the editor swung back, however, the eyes, under the drooping lids, were fixed on the pencil and the face was expressionless. The editor spoke:

"Is it hard for you to learn?"

Once more the lids went lower and the rubber bands pulled at the comedy mouth.

"Not if I see any use to it."

"How did you come to get into newspaper work? What's the idea, hanging on here?"

The shoulders straightened, the eyelids rose, the mouth set. " 'Cause I got to write. I got something to say sometime when I know how."

For a moment the editor was speechless. Then he exploded.

"Ye gods! He wants to write because he's got something to say sometime. And he doesn't even know that a sentence isn't just a gob of words!"

The startled cub shuffled back a step or two. The editor went on.

"All right! I'll make it of use to you! I'll make it of use to you to learn about sentences! I'm giving you your two-weeks notice. Understand? If your sentences show improvement in two weeks, I'll try you another week. The first week you aren't better than you were the week before, out you go. You're not a fool, Jenks, but about sentences you've been plain d——d stupid. Get me?"

The rubber bands loosed, the eyelids rose, and from the poised pencil the eyes came up to meet those of the editor. What they found there was not unkindness.

"Yes sir," said Jenks. "Thank you."

Some do not agree

Mr. Sargent's choice between the two story-beginnings quoted by him in the January MONTHLY has not gone unchallenged. One objector says that the condemned opening would appeal both to persons who like music and to readers to whom its descriptive mention of the playing would recall pleasant experiences associated in their mind with music or playing.

Another says, "I don't doubt that the two openings came from stories quite unlike each other in their interest, and that for its purpose the one which describes the playing was as good as the other. I think it better in quality, though if I didn't like that kind of story I shouldn't like the kind of opening appropriate to it, either. As I see it the 'bad' example isn't a good example of bad openings at all, but only a good example of what readers of certain kinds wouldn't like."

Practicing the daily dozen

"All right, Doctor," says a reader—referring to what the Owl said in the February MONTHLY about "fighting" one's ideas—"now you have diagnosed the trouble, go ahead and prescribe a cure for it. What will I do so I will get my ideas down clear if I think like that? I mean patching together like you said. How do the skilled editors you tell about get that way?"

The second question first. The skilled editors "get that way"—i.e., become skillful in editing—by considering what precisely the idea is that is to be put into words, and then whether the words and wordings used by the writer do satisfactorily "put" the idea.

Having "got that way," the editor is fairly quick in revising obscure or awkward phrases and sentences; often he is revising them in his mind as he first reads them (if he didn't do that, he would not know upon finishing the reading whether the poor expression in a manuscript can be made passably good with a reasonable amount of editing).

"Getting that way"

Editing the last three sentences quoted in paragraph one, he might (if precision together with clearness and completeness of idea were what he is especially aiming at) make the phrasing run thus: "If I think in the way you describe, by patching particulars together hit or miss, how shall I learn to think more readily and get my ideas down more clearly? How do the editors you speak of attain their skill?" If he wished to keep the expression less formal, he might make it something like this: "How shall I learn to get my ideas clear, supposing I'm in the habit of thinking patch-piece fashion? How do editors get their skill in correcting and improving what a man writes?"

The Owl did not, however, in his February comment, "diagnose the trouble"; he described some symptoms and added an opinion to the effect that in what is written these symptoms can by special treatment be prevented from showing at their worst.

Put on these records

Only the individual "case" can be diagnosed, since in separate instances the same symptoms may result from different causes—as when one person's difficulty in thinking arises from some qualitative or functional defect or some pathological condition in the brain and nervous system, and another's results merely from lack of adequate training and practice in making use of the intellectual equipment. When nothing more is known than that the "symptoms" are present, no more can be said by way of diagnosis than that something is keeping the mind from functioning well.

The mental equipment may be adequate and this something be merely the lack of such vigorous and persistent exercise of the thinking powers as will train and develop them. When that is so, the

two exercises outlined below are likely to be helpful, as physical exercises of the daily-dozen sort are helpful in getting the body into "condition."

Exercise 1: Take position at desk. Typewriter or pencil and paper Set down the names of three familiar objects or things. Set down two abstract terms. Write short but accurate and adequate definitions of the objects; of the terms. Ready—begin! One, two, three, four.

Repeat daily.

Exercise 2: Take position at desk. Place a manuscript of your own before you. Revise it sentence by sentence, clarifying, simplifying and making the meanings plain. Ready—begin! . . . .

Repeat regularly.

You can have a gift

"You can have a gift for feeling," says Alexander Black, of King Features, writing about the success of Dorothy Flack with romantic cartoons—"you can have a gift for feeling but you can't have a gift for knowing. Knowing is a job."

In these two sentences is a complete answer to such critics as not only affect a supercilious attitude toward the many persons who, having a desire to write, seek through instruction to acquire a knowledge of the writing processes, but also reveal an attitude of hostility toward those who provide the instruction.

"You can't have a gift for knowing. Knowing is a job." Such instruction opens up the special knowledge to the would-be learner. That is its purpose and its usefulness, and more than that it does not profess to do. It provides access, sometimes the only practicable access, to knowledge necessary to the aspirant if he is to try out his desire or—it may be—take advantage of his "gift for feeling."

Stories that have pleased boys

"Please send me the number containing the story so-and-so." When letters keep coming, all asking for some one story, editors know that that story has rung the bell. Following the guidance afforded by requests for particular stories, the editors of the American Boy recently selected from the magazine eighteen varied stories for reprinting in book form ("American Boy Stories," Doubleday, Page & Co., Garden City, N. Y.; $2). To anyone interested in boy stories—whether as stories or as examples in which the characteristics of juvenile fiction can be studied—the interest or helpfulness of such a collection from such a journal is obvious.

To particularize once as concerns their utility: We have all been told that mostly the (short) story for boys had better concern one and only one main or central situation. What does that mean? When we are telling the story of the woods-green boy who knew too much to carry a compass when he left camp, why can't we ring in the story of the deer-hunt—hunting stuff—and the story of the fight between the puma and the bear—

wild-animal stuff—and all about what the rescuers of the lost boy did and said in their two-day search—another big batch of, on the whole, off-side matters?

We can, but *if* we have seen why these eighteen American Boy stories are interesting and effective, we shall know that we had better not do it. We shall have perceived what "one single main situation" means, and shall have begun to see what is meant by "developing" the one single, central situation. If we can't begin to see or to feel this through such a collection of stories, the probabilities are that we were cut out to be readers rather than writers of stories.

Of the present conception of what fiction for boys should be, Griffith Ogden Ellis, editor of the American Boy, says in the Preface:

"Boys' literature a generation ago was usually either so wishy-washy that boys wouldn't read it, or so pyrotechnically adventurous that they were forbidden to read it. Recent years have brought the firm belief that boys are entitled to just as good reading—just as carefully accurate settings, as gripping and entertaining action, as life-like portrayal of problems and characters—as anybody else."

Publication of other volumes of "American Boy Stories" is contemplated.

"That old devil sea"

"Mother, may I go swimming?"

"Yes, dear."

"Oh, goody. 'Bye, Mother."

"Jane! Jane!! Come back a minute."

"What, Mother?"

"Hang your clothes on a hickory limb, dear. And Jane, promise mother something. You won't go *near* the awful water, *will* you, dear?"

There are aspirants to the name of Writer who conduct themselves as if they had promised not to go nearer than the hickory limb to the literary waters.

Thaw-trickles from round the Oak

Pete Peters says, "The fellers thet starts these crusades to dee-bunk somethin' or other is mostly bunkin' somebody or other, an' sometimes it's their selves. "Miss Glegg, Dellton's sweet-singin' poetess, is organizin' a lit'ry club for muchal criticism an' sympathy. "Calc'late they'll get it. Bill Blivens an' Susie Johns has already signified their intentions o' joinin'. Bill's int'rested in ads, an' Susie takes to sob-stories an' the tabloid press."

Probably fifty percent of all mis-spellings (says an observing teacher) result from mispronunciations and negligent enunciation carried phonetically into writing. The writer spells the word as he speaks it. Something like twenty percent more of mis-spellings result from phonetic representation of words that happen not to be spelled as they are correctly pronounced. But virtually all mis-spellings, he declares, are charge-

able to an inattentive eye and an inattentive mind in conjunction; our eye fails to see and our mind to note the spelling as we encounter the word in print.

"Efficiency" is playing the columnists and space-writers a mean trick. The newspaper publishers are agreeing on what legislators would call a working compromise—for the writers. They are dressing the papers in a new type that "besides being easier to read, permits ten to twelve percent more matter to the column." To the column-paid space-writer, the adoption of the new type by his paper will mean a rate reduction of ten to twelve percent unless the scale be adjusted. Or unless he justify the gloomy forecast of the old compositor. "Yeuh, I know them birds. There'll be more to the cullume all right. More words."

But what bothers the Owl is, who is going to think of the words?

Power of Jingles

To the simple mind any jingle has something of the miraculous about it. The very fact that a statement falls into rhyme and rhythm seems to indicate that there is a harmony, pre-established in Nature, between the statements it makes.

Men speak prose, but the gods rhyme. Hence it is that, the world over, proverbs, which embody the credo of the vulgar are usually expressed in jingle, and since whatever is true rhymes, whatever rhymes is true.

The more sophisticated have not, to be sure, quite this simple faith. They are not absolutely sure that

A pint's a pound
The world around,

or even that "Early to bed," etc., is true just because these statements seem to have an irrefutable neatness.

Yet even here rhyme casts its magic spell and many a platitude, many a false statement has gone thundering down the years merely because a Pope or a Dryden gave it that triumphant finality which is the secret of the heroic couplet.—*The Nation.*

The Best Things from PRINTLAND

What Is Thinking?

Thinking is not just mental activity. For the most part, undirected mental activity bears no more essential resemblance to thinking than playing cat's cradle does to knitting. One uses the same means and spends the same amount of time, but in the end one is left with nothing made, nothing done. Modern psychology is beginning to clear up for us the old distinction between thinkers and men of action. A real thinker is always a man of action. His thought leads somewhere, means something, gets something done. It is the rock foundation for successful action. The mind is the body's laboratory, its workroom, where plans are made, alternatives considered and tested, materials manipulated this way and that until the system which promises ultimate success is worked out and the overt action can begin.

Before going ahead to consider ways of training ourselves to think it may be well to clear up some of the old misapprehensions about thought. Thinking, in the first place, is not day-dreaming or reverie, or even meditation. One of the most revolutionizing ideas that the newer psychology brought us, about half a generation ago, was that the day-dreamer was no thinker, but a sick man who, finding the real world too hard for his taste, withdrew into his mind and made a new world of his own—a safe, friendly, uncompetitive world. In his soft and childish internal world the day-dreamer did his living, but all his mental activity, so far from solving the problem of his adjustment to real life, made him progressively weaker, and less able to cope with the world about him.

Only one type may hold with truth that fantasy is an aid to him in his outward relations—the writer. Where discipline and problems of arrangement and method enter, fantasy takes on a hardier aspect, and becomes, what all thinking must be, a means of making a more satisfactory adjustment to life.

Meditation may or may not be thinking. As it is ordinarily used, meditation implies a sort of reverie on a fixed subject, the examining of an idea, usually religious or

ethical, to the end of finding out all the values already inherent in it. Such examination does frequently make for greater definiteness and clarity in actual life; but the mulling over of any thought, only restating what is already given in however many forms, is not thinking.

Memorizing, it goes without saying, is not thinking. In some disguise or other, though, it frequently appears to be. The abstracting and restating of another's thought, while it is good practice for independent thinking, is not thought. The playing of a symphony already composed is not the composition of it. The expounding of another's idea, while it may incite thought in others, is an exercise, chiefly, in appreciation. —*The Outline of Success.*

Literature and Universities

The skilled performer in any of the arts but literature must have a training whose technique sets him apart from ordinary men. His education in the handling of paints and brushes, chisels and marble, counterpoint and chords, columns and domes, is a thing for the rest of the world to admire but not to share. But the man of letters has no such monopoly of his art. He has merely pursued it further than the laboring man who knows how to order a meal in English. The language is common property. The man who develops his manner of using it to the plane of art may use tools that are more finely tempered, but they are of the same shape as those employed by the most commonplace writer. Words must give the thought its visible form. So the man who aspires to write with grace and distinction tries to create an artificial separation. It should last long enough to give him the feeling that he is working in a medium as different from the speech of the man in the street as a dry-point is different from a circus billboard.

Resources and associations of university life offer just such a retreat. The undergraduate is provided not only with an education, but with a mode of life, leisurely, tranquil, suitable to study and quiet thought. The men who were steeped in the beauties of the peaceful streams and meadows around Oxford or Cambridge, who passed long, quiet years in the cool courts and gardens of the colleges, who found congenial friends and tutors, read much classical and modern literature and exchanged ideas with stimulating minds, naturally bore afterward the mark of those years.

Undergraduates enter classes nowadays which are guaranteed to turn them out "sure-fire" playwrights or novelists or short-story writers. They specialize in something which will bring them speedy fame and wealth, and care little for the pleasures of quiet, leisurely reading. Oscar Wilde said that our youthfulness was our oldest tradition. "It has been going on now for 300 years." Perhaps it is now giving way to the beginnings of a new one, noted these last fifty years; a flair for early specializa-

tion. The broad base of the pyramid may be done away with altogether, and the apex will be erected on a scaffolding of light, standard-size steel girders. — *New York Times.*

Educational Stories

The American Missionary, a monthly magazine published as the official organ of the "Congregational Missionary Societies for the Home Field," carries the following paragraph in an article describing the work of the Congregational Education Society, 14 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Those who are especially qualified, may find a suggestion for the use of their knowledge and abilities.

"The story has always been a favorite factor among educational materials. The demand for good stories constantly exceeds the supply. In the specialized field of missionary education this is equally true. Workers in this field need satisfactory stories that carry their message of understanding and appreciation of other racial groups. To meet this need the "Here and There Stories" are published by the Department of Missionary Education, with the cooperation of the Woman's Board of Missions and the Homeland Boards. They do not deal with these Boards as such, which would scarcely be appropriate for use with boys and girls; but they do give an insight into the lives of children and older people too, in different sections of the United States and in other parts of the world, where these Boards carry on their work. These are human, personal and interesting stories. Two are issued each month, except July and August, one centered in our own country and the other in some other part of the world. Twenty new stories a year are thus made available at a cost of only fifty cents. The letters that come to the Department indicate that they are used in the home for bedtime stories or for Sunday afternoons; in the Church School as part of the worship period, for lesson illustrations, or as an aid in the friendship or missionary work; for boys' and girls' reading; and for informal dramatization in various places."

Women Writers Advised By Kathleen Norris

Two of the most successful of today's short-story writers are women who have worked their own way up, heavily handicapped and without assistance. One is the wife of a man whose business keeps him in a lonely little tropical town, more than 5000 miles away from Broadway. She looks out upon banana trees and long stretches of marsh, humming with brilliant flies, and writes delightfully of small-town New England.

She wrote her first stories patiently, steadily, without one single soul to encourage her or advise her—for the husband was not particularly interested in her ambitions—she sent them away in long envelopes and waited for months. And when they came back, she re-

read them carefully, puzzled and doubtful and discouraged, and changed a word here and there, and sent them forth again.

And she arrived. After three years of this, her first story was accepted, her first check came through the mail.

"I never had a lesson in composition, or a single criticism through a correspondence school," she confessed.

"But I read all the time, of course. And when I read a short-story that seemed especially good, I would think about it—analyze it as well as I could.

This woman reads Shakespeare, Browning, Dickens, Stevenson, Kipling, Conrad, many of the English essayists, and several of the better magazines. She loves poetry, and frequently memorizes any bit of it that seems especially lovely, as the easiest way to hold it.

The other self-made writer that I know, lived until her 33d year in a small, mid-western town, one of those enormously prosperous centres that gush electric lights across thousands of acres of wheat fields, where packing plants and grain elevators flank the handsome new Union High school, and the laundress drives to work in her own car, and gets $6 a day.

This woman writes pioneer stories, adventure stories, Indian and covered-wagon stories, and paid an income tax of more than $5000 last year. Nobody ever helped her, nobody ever encouraged or directed her, nobody ever thought that she would ever be anything but a nice, capable, rather absurdly ambitious woman, who talked authorship while she washed dishes—dishes—dishes—and looked out of a kitchen window across seven flat miles of barley field, with two windmills and a silo for its only decoration.

And she also reads Shakespeare, Browning, Dickens, Stevenson, Kipling, Conrad, many of the English essayists, and a few of the better magazines. She tells me she also reads newspapers, comic supplements, cook-books, "Judge" and "College Humor," the almanac, and the children's school histories. She reads everything, in fact; she has actually come to think in terms of fiction.

Every other year she comes on to New York, to see editors and buy a few frocks, and she admits that if she had chanced to be there, as a girl, or in any other big printing and publishing center, she might have begun her writing several years earlier than she did.

"But as it is, I did my living first, and my writing second," she says contentedly, "and that's really the more fortunate way."

And she is quite right. The tragedy of the girl who wants to write, and for whom the way is cleared, is that she throws away the living years in following her profession, and finds herself at 35 successful, perhaps, or perhaps not, but alone.

I know hundreds of them—thousands of them—they drift in groups about all our big cities. Girls who have shown high school or college promise, and whose cir-

cumstances, or whose generous families have made it possible for them to come to the city, and find the most fascinating little one-room-and-bath-and-kitchenette apartment, and furnish it for exactly $22, with a homespun curtain and a blue bowl—and nothing to do but write!

"I couldn't write at home," they plead, "with everybody asking me how genius was burning today, and mother calling upstairs to ask if I like corn fritters! Too many distractions."

So she comes to the city, and at first she does find a tremendous inspiration in the ambitions and energies of the boys and girls all about her. Everybody has the most marvelous plots for everything; this one is going to do a play, and that one has the most extraordinarily original ideas. A third has had two stories accepted for publication—imagine, was actually paid for them—and to a fourth an editor has written, saying that his stuff showed promise.

The girl glows and revels in this intoxicating atmosphere, and she rents a typewriter for $5 a month, and buys a box of yellow paper, and feels tremendously business-like and confident.

But there, alas, in 99 cases out of every 100—it stops short. If you meet this same girl in another twelve months, she is still gabbling of her work, her plots, her big novel. She is always rushing about with "the crowd," going to Hungarian restaurants and Chinese theatres and riding on the top of busses and seeing painters and writers off for Europe.

This goes on for a while, and then she becomes one of the hundreds of hangers-on who does a little reviewing, receives a commission for placing an occasional article, jabbers the strange dialect of the editorial offices and publishing houses, but arrives nowhere in the end. What eventually becomes of her nobody knows, exactly; the last one hears of her is that she is helping a woman with a summer boarding house in Asbury Park, or that her brother who lives in Ogden, has lost his wife, and she is taking care of him and the little girl.

Imagination and a desire to write are very common attributes, after all. The secret is to add to them a certain genius for real living, for imagining honestly, for dreaming true. Anyone could write the story of a child who found something in his oyster, and took it home to his widowed mother, who found it was a pearl of the first value—

Or the story of the discouraged prospector—

Or the story of the cub reporter who went out to report a pink tea and ran upon the murder scoop of the century—

Or the story of the girl who was left only Grandad's old Bible—

These stories take imagination, and writing, of course—but they are not real—they are not true, in the finer sense, and they must be more than ordinarily well done to be done at all.

Gloomy stories, too, horror stories, are obvious and easy. But Poe and De Maupassant are, unfortunately, deceased.

And the girl who determinedly and picturesquely plunges into the career of a writer, must be very careful or she will find that it is only this sort of inspiration that comes to her at all. Stories of home towns and family life, of vital human emotions and the crises we all know—she has deliberately put away from her.

The truth is this: The stay-at-home-woman's town may contain only 3200 persons, and her job tomorrow morning may be the same old crumb brushing, rinsing of the percolator, drawing of shades, and wheeling of little Muffymuff to market to buy butter, raisins, any vegetable that looks nice and fresh, and elastic for Bobby's garters.

And yet, if she will see the drama and the beauty of all this, and manage somehow—desperately, determinedly, stubbornly, to put down just a few lines of it every day, she has a better chance to make a writer of herself than the girl who goes away armed to the teeth with freedom, ambition, Daddy's check and the new typewriter.

Even if it seems to you the most hopeless drivel imaginable, write something down every day. Just a dozen lines—just two. They will anchor you to your work, keep your mind on it, if no more.

Keep a fine book, Keats, Shakespeare, Browning, or one of the moderns, near at hand, and dip into it when you can. Clip articles from magazines, to read and digest as time permits, and above all, read carefully the fiction of the magazines for which you want to write. Study the stories for which they have paid, and you will some day perceive in a flash what they want, exactly the quality of crispness, of compactness that your story hasn't got.

There's no short cut. It would be gratifying to send your story to some big writer and have him praise it inordinately, and tell you that a big editor saw it, and wants it, and a big publisher wants it after that, for a book—but it doesn't happen that way. Work your own way through—don't hope for a miracle. The only miracle lies in your own finger tips—The Springfield *Sunday Union* and *Republican.*

Writes on the Wing

Edwin P. Norwood, author of "The Other Side of the Circus," writes his books piecemeal wherever he happens to be. Being publicity director for the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus, he is as wide a wanderer as the big show itself.

The first chapters of this book were written in Fargo, N. D., Seattle, Wash., and San Diego, Calif. The remainder was completed during five weeks in Carcassonne, France, and a month at Mt. Estorial, Portugal.

"When Mrs. Norwood and I were being shown through the hotel at

Mt. Estorial," says Mr. Norwood, "I confessed that I was a writer and wished to be where the noise of my machine would not disturb other guests.

" 'Ah! An author!" exclaimed our host. 'Come, please. I have just the accommodations for an author.' And leading us to a suite, he threw open the doors with the grandiloquent assurance that it was 'here that Meester H. G. Wells had worked for several weeks but a few months before.'

"But," adds Mr. Norwood, "I gently explained that mine was but a modest volume and that we would prefer rooms in kind, which we engaged on the floor above."—*San Diego News.*

The Political Novel

The novel of political ideas is perhaps the most difficult form of fiction. It has long been established as a *genre* in English literature, yet it is seldom indeed that a readable, not to say reliable, example appears in the mass of novels that arrives each week at the jaded reviewer's desk. The truth is that the political novelist must have specific gifts which rarely exist together in the same personality. He must be an artist, in the first place; a close student of human nature, with a grip of what is eternal and essential in it, who can make the results of his study convincing and captivating to the reader. But he must also know politics like a politician; that is, he must know the "great game," as it has been called, as the fisherman knows the sea with its depths and shallows, its currents and cross-currents, its innumerable and infinitely varied denizens. He cannot "get up" politics as Zola used to study this or that social question, by interviewing experts and accumulating documents. He must be inside the flux and reflux of it all himself; else he cannot understand the language of Downing Street, the jargon of Committee meetings, the current talk of the great political clubs, the terminology of organizers, the preachments of propaganda which from time to time are compressed into electioneering battlecries. Each party has its specific dialects, and he must know them all—not as a parrot-politician knows them, but as a statesman who sees politics as history in the making and give its right value to the crowd-compelling verbiage of the moment. In the circumstances it is not surprising that the political novel of permanent value is a very rare thing indeed.—*The Morning Post* (London).

Language of Underworld

The jargon of the underworld is an ever-changing vernacular, but the New York City police succeed in keeping up with it. They study it as if it were a foreign language, using a dictionary of gangster terms compiled in the headquarters of the Detective Bureau in Centre Street. This dictionary already comprises more than a hundred words in common usage among the criminal class. Gleaned from prisoners, from wardens of prisons and from thugs at large in dance halls

and gambling joints, the more newly coined terms are added to the collection as soon as they are definitely known to be common expressions.

Members of gangs have one purpose in using this lingo and the police have another in studying it. Thugs wish to be able to talk in public about their criminal plans and actions. The police want to be able to detect a gun-man by the language he speaks and also to understand what he is saying.

Several years ago Acting Captain John A. Lyons of the Detective Bureau jotted down the first words in his underworld language dictionary. From the list now in existence are chosen the test questions put to young detectives entering the department. For example, the new men are expected to know just what is meant by such a description as this:

"Smith had a shiv and a pow and was sucking bamboo in a flop joint. He was caught at this and was given a finif, just barely missing a sawbuck. After his next job he was laying in for a month. Then he went on the lam again, but they got a reader for him and he was taken. He sprung Jones, the pal who opened the jug with him."

Translated, this means: Smith had a knife and a gun and was smoking opium in a lodging house. He was caught at this and was given a five-year sentence, just barely missing a ten-year sentence. After his next crime he was in hiding for a month. Then he went on the run again, but they got a warrant for him and he was arrested. He took the full responsibility for the crime from Jones, the companion who had forced open the bank with him."

Nitro-glycerin is known as "soup," bootleg whiskey as "coffin varnish." Many and varied are the words used to describe persons. "Mouthpiece" means lawyer; "damper getter" means till tapper; "boosters" are shoplifters; "junkies" or "sleigh riders" are drug addicts, who must have their "white stuff" (cocaine or morphine).

"Fly me a kite," says the bandit to his pal, "and tell me how much ice he's got and whether stickers could work down there. Also tell me whether any lush workers go there, and how much it costs to buy a ducket back on the rattlers. You see, I once got a rumble there while I was working as a peter man, but I was freed later when they found they had made the wrong rap."

Translated, this reads: "Write me a letter and tell me how many diamonds he's got and whether postoffice safe blowers could work down there. Also tell me whether any pickpockets who specialize on drunks go there, and how much it costs to buy a ticket back on the street cars. You see, I was once discovered in the act there as I was working as a safe blower, but I was freed later when they found they didn't have the goods on me."

A "scratcher" is a forger; a "big mitt man" is a confidence man who plies his trade on ocean liners; a "keister getter" is a baggage thief who works around railroad stations particularly.—*New York Times.*

The feeling is widespread that art approaches perfection to the extent to which the means of its accomplishment are subdued to the vanishing point and only the achieved result impresses the listener, the beholder, or the reader.

Even though we might feel compelled to accept such a conclusion with reservations, doubtless we should all agree that when the artist leaves on his completed work obtrusive traces of his methods and implements, he blurs the hoped-for effects. The single exception in art is in oil painting, for certain art critics go into ecstasies over brush-strokes, and seem never to get far enough away from the canvas to see the picture. These would, of course, greet this statement with the snort, "Heresy!" But, to the generality of cultivated folk, even masterly brush-strokes may be left offensively in evidence, so within reasonable limitations it is true that we enjoy most the art that conceals its mechanics. The most meticulous sculptors efface their chisel marks, musical artists seek ever for unlabored final impressions, and skilled builders of books prefer to remove their scaffolding.

It is, however, both impossible and unnecessary to deceive the eye of the trained observer, who can see beneath the surface those marks of workmanship which the casual art-taster never sees. Indeed, the nice, conscious adjustment of means to ends—which we call "technique"— becomes an enjoyable thing when it is observed objectively, and now and then it is so admirably accomplished as to be beautiful in and of itself.

Some English wit it was—his name for the moment is forgotten —who professed that the chief satisfaction he experienced during an orchestral concert lay in watching "the marvellous coincidence of the fiddlers' elbows". "Delightfully smooth performance", the average listener might have pronounced it; and the critic, "accurate bowing". There we have the several viewpoints.

We are all one in liking to see a master mechanic, an expert artizan, a finished artist, handle his implements with that perfection of

control which makes results seem easy. The Editor has a notion that this trait accounts for the number of serious citizens who will stop, however important their errands, to see any large piece of construction work going on in our streets. Don't say, Mister Man, that you never have been late to work because you could not resist the fascination of watching the facile power with which a steam-dredgerman guides his bucket, for that would denounce you as being quite *too* superior to the rest of us! And what but this almost universal human characteristic causes crowds to collect before a window in which a demonstrator is performing with a razor-hone feats that no purchaser ever will be able to equal, or to watch "The Human Fly" scale a building, or even to sit absorbed through a juggler's performance? Mere curiosity, you say. But is not such curiosity just an interest in seeing how the jigger of life works?

It may be only another manifestation of a pesky critical instinct, aided and abetted by years of observation, but the Editor must confess that he is a slow reader instead of being—as most editors are supposed to be—a rapid one. And it all comes, he has a notion, from the habit of analyzing and evaluating the *means* that the author has chosen to bring about his effects. Sometimes this double consciousness of the action itself and the literary mechanics by which the action is produced and guided is a burden to the reader, for he would fain lose himself in the pure enjoyment of the play, the poem, the story, the essay—as one does when listening to a production in a musical medium with which he is less at home. But at other times the same reader will feel an added pleasure from recognizing as he reads that an artist in literary structure is building surely and deftly in a way that is not only admirable technically but is carrying to him just the story or what not that the creator's mind and heart have conceived.

But the habit of studying technique while reading has its penalties, as has already been suggested, for it really does mar enjoyment betimes to become suddenly conscious of an inept phrase, an obscure sentence, an abrupt transition, a piece of plot inadequacy of any minor or major sort, even when we really know that the work as a whole is excellent. Then it becomes necessary to remind ourselves that our friend is no less charming because he has a mole behind his right ear, or has a mouth of over-generous width, just as Samuel Johnson did when someone mentioned certain faults of Oliver Goldsmith, who had just passed on: "Sir, he was a very great man; his faults were of the kind that made us love him."

The sum of the matter is that we are constantly enjoying things of which one part of us does not approve, and admitting the excellency of other things that for the life of us we cannot enjoy. It is a poor creature who has not two sides, not to say a half-dozen.

Recently while reading for diver-

sion Peter B. Kyne's romantic novel, "The Understanding Heart", the Editor had more than a little enjoyment in observing the neat way in which the creator of Cappy Ricks had managed a piece of necessary preparation that served several plot-purposes — "preparation" being used in the technical sense, meaning the "planting" of a condition so as to make possible the later use of a certain incident which would otherwise be implausible.

Bob Mason, a manly sort of chap, with many likable qualities, had before the story opens committed a homicide that his friends all believed was justifiable; nevertheless he had been convicted and committed to San Quentin prison, in California. His longings for his old mountain life in the North, and for a sight of his baby boy—abandoned by the child's mother—had led Bob to break his parole and run away from the prison road-making gang, and as the story opens he is making for his former home section in upper California, with a sheriff's posse—using blood hounds—trailing him hotly.

Monica Dale, a fascinating and altogether worth-while girl of 21, is a United States Ranger in charge of Bogus Lookout, her own property, a lonely tower on the edge of the San Dimas national forest. Monica has since childhood been a friend of Bob Mason's, and for a period had mothered his child; so now the fleeing convict naturally but unwisely makes for Bogus Lookout and the help of Monica Dale.

Chief Ranger Casey, who really likes and believes in his subordinate, Monica, feels pretty sure, when he hears of Bob Mason's escape, that on account of their old friendship Bob will go directly to Monica, and in this Casey agrees with the forecast made by the Sheriff. The Chief Ranger consequently decides not to telephone Monica, whose lookout tower is some miles away, to sweep the landscape with her powerful glass, mounted on Bogus Lookout; and the fact that he failed to trust her to the extent of telephoning her of her friend Bob's escape forms an important piece of preparation for the next vital incident in the opening action of the novel.

As Monica is cruising about the forest, she comes upon Bob Mason, unrecognizable from a five-days' growth of beard on his scratched and bloody face; and she is frankly amazed, for she had not heard of his flight. When she hears his story and sees his exhaustion from rapid travel through the wild mountain brush, almost without food and rest, the claims of friendship triumph over her obligations to the service—for it is the duty of the Rangers in a national forest to assist the officers of the law—and she helps Mason to her cabin and there feeds him, and puts him to bed. The fact that Casey has not trusted her far enough to notify her of Mason's escape strengthened her decision.

All this Monica does with the sound of the baying bloodhounds momentarily becoming louder. Then she takes her resolve. When

presently the great animals break out into the clearing she deliberately suppresses her gentle instincts and shoots first one and then the other bloodhound.

Soon the Sheriff and his posse appear and the officer asks her eagerly who shot the dogs. Monica boldly replies that she did, and carries the battle directly to the enemy by demanding by what right he and his friends were hunting with dogs in a national reserve, without a permit, and she caps the climax by announcing that they are under arrest.

When the Sheriff recovers sufficiently from his amazement and anger to explain, Monica coolly asks why, if Chief Ranger Casey was cooperating with him, the Sheriff, in this man-hunt, Casey hadn't telephoned her to be on the lookout for Mason, with her glass. Of course the Sheriff knows the answer very well, but it would be impolitic to explain, and so for the moment he does not insist on searching her cabin. In fact, he doesn't believe that if she were hiding Mason indoors Monica would have invited him and his posse to come up to her house—as she had—to have some refreshments.

We are not now concerned with the rest of the story, but it will from this partial recital of the opening situation appear how vital a part in the plot is played by the Chief Ranger's decision not to telephone Monica announcing the hunt for Bob Mason.

"Preparation" is recognized by every competent fictional technician as an important piece of plot mechanism, but not all writers of fairly wide acceptation know how to handle it deftly. When the author "plants" a foundation fact with a view to using it later as a condition upon which some incident of importance is to be based, he is confronted by the problem of just how much prominence to give its introduction. If he should do it too obscurely, the reader might not remember the fact at the time when it should be recalled, and so the motivation would be in danger of being blurred. On the contrary, if the "planting" should be overstressed, the acute-nosed reader would smell a mouse; and there you are. In this as well as in a score of other respects, "just enough and not too much" is a recipe that the experienced cook is always sure to follow.

Another important aspect of "preparation" is one that Mr. Kyne observed admirably in plotting the situation just related—the "planting" itself must be well motivated; otherwise it will furnish a lamentable example of a weak sub-base for a foundation. When Casey tells his new ranger, Anthony Garland, about Monica's friendship for Bob Mason, he provides for the reader a natural and therefore convincing reason why he, as the Chief Ranger, does not inform Monica, his assistant, of Mason's flight. And of course at the same time the author is telling the reader all that should be known of foundation facts in order to an understanding of the opening action.

Now, to revert to the cogitations

that preface these observations, the Editor has a notion that a study of how present-day writers of ability handle the element of "preparation" in their plots would prove abundantly worth while to writers great and small; for even the "great" are sometimes guilty of an awkward handling of this important piece of plot mechanism. And note that word "study". Casual reading is well enough for diversion, and we all need it occasionally, but the literary student must now and again read for technical observation.

"Mr. Editor," said the Sweet Young Thing from the senior class in Journalism, during the course of an interview which the *ursus major* of magazinedom had granted her, "do you disapprove of students in journalism being cursory readers?"

"I do," snapped the crusty old chap, "because cursory readers write the stuff that makes even saintly editors use cursory language."

The Editor has often wondered whether it is from unconscious cerebration or intention that so many young writers name fictional characters after actors, authors and other public folk. Probably the former explanation is the true one. In any case, it is a bad habit. It is even worse to inject the comedy element into a serious story by parodying a well-known name. The newspaper humorist of a bygone day thought it funny to name a pompous dame "Mrs. Astorbilt," but when a writer of today names an industrial magnate Fenry Hord, or a banker Beerpont Morgen, he is just silly.

Work

"Let me but do my work from day to day
In field or forest, desk or loom,
In roaring market place, or tranquil room.
Let me but find it in my heart to say,
When vagrant wishes beckon me astray,
This is my work, my blessing, not my doom;
Of all who live I am the one by whom
This work can best be done in my own way,
To suit my spirits and to prove my powers;
Then shall I cheerful turn when the long shadows fall
At eventide to play, and love and rest
Because I know for me my work is best."

—HENRY VAN DYKE.

The editor of "Everybody's Chestnut Tree," Spring and MacDougal Sts., New York, quotes: "Jokes are not accepted if a pun constitutes the whole point in the story, nor are anecdotes of children unless exceptionally humorous. Dialect, if you are familiar with dialect and local color.

"We are most interested in humorous anecdotes peculiar to American life. Non-original jokes are not barred if enough is known about their origin to be reasonably certain that readers have not heard them before."

Whiz Bang, Robbinsdale, Minn., sends out helpful criticism. Captain Billy suggests: "New stories with a kick, clever epigrams, farmyard philosophy and poems of the type used in our Smokehouse Poetry, are watched for. Try us again when you run across something you think might make hay for the Robbinsdale mules. Very, truly, E. J. Smithson, One of the Farm Hands."—H. N.

The Northwestern Miller, Minneapolis, Minn., pays a cent a word for material about old mills and $3 apiece for photographs. Payment is very prompt, and the editor, Mr. C. K. Michener, is courteous to deal with. Material about the mills may be from two hundred to five hundred words, depending upon interest.

The P. B. Oakley Photographic Agency, Box 331, Geneva, New York, buys photographs of natural or made oddities, unusual objects, etc., provided they are accompanied by enough text to explain pictures. They returned one print to me with a request for a clearer one of the same object, a spring bubbling out of a tree (artificially constructed). This might be an insight to why many pictures of appparently worthy objects are sent back with no explanation.

Antiques, Boston, the magazine dealing with old treasures, art, little-known industries, old bills and letters, wills, etc., offers an extremely useful two-page outline upon the wants of the magazine. After reading this outline a person knows just what and what not to send it.

I have found that a typewriter ribbon may be renewed to a surprising degree by winding it onto

one spool and putting eight or ten drops of oil around the outside. If allowed to soak in for a day or so it distributes evenly and will not blur. Glycerine will not do this relivening act for a typewriter ribbon, but will for a copy ribbon.

The editors of the Saturday Evening Post, Philadelphia, are very prompt and very courteous in answering inquiries as to whether or not they would consider articles on any certain subject. They usually send a personal letter when fiction is sent back.

The Edward Stratemeyer Syndicate, 315 Fourth Avenue, New York, publishers of boys books, have stories written for them on their own outlines. They report that they have many author-applicants, but would consider offers to write if the writer will send along some of his published stuff in this line.—J. T. K.

J. M. Thacker, of Laundry Age, 1478 Broadway, New York, writes: "Laundry Age is opposed to credits in the laundry business," in returning an article on a credit plan.

H. P. Bridge, of The Keystone, P. O. Box 1424, Philadelphia, writes: "At the present time we are particularly interested in articles for our Credit Department. A reading of this section of The Keystone will be your best guide to our requirements."

The Dental Digest, 220 W. 42nd St., New York, is a good market for articles of interest to dentists. They prefer articles about and by dentists rather than general articles. They have the bad habit of stamping the date, hour and minute of the arrival of the manuscript on the first page, even when it is returned to the writer.

Cleaning & Dyeing World is located at 3723 Olive St., St. Louis, Missouri.

Herbert Photos, Inc., 480 Lexington Avenue, New York, writes that they are not receiving enough photographs to meet the demand. They add that practically 50% of the pictures being submitted are being purchased. They want to get in touch with more writers, who have cameras or who have access to good news pictures or photographs of the unusual, etc. Write to them for the particulars.

Frank J. White, of The Pharmaceutical Era, 154 Nassau St., New York, writes: "On account of our limited space, we are unable to use illustrations. He kindly suggested a possible market for a returned manuscript, that proved profitable to me. The Pharmaceutical Era stamps the date of receiving the manuscript on the manuscript itself even where the manuscript is returned.

Robert A. Orr, new editor for the Fairchild publications, Women's Wear, and Daily News Record, New York, (both daily publications) is always eager to receive up-to-the-minute trade news of department stores, men's stores, women's stores, etc., including changes of ownership, new businesses, bankruptcies, deaths of owners, etc. Each large town and city has a Fairchild representative or can have one. It pays to be

their representative, for they pay promptly on the 10th of each month for the material accepted during the preceding month. My monthly checks have varied from $2.00 to over $40.00.

David C. Cook, Jr., of The Boys' World, Elgin, Ill., writes: "We have almost despaired of securing the type of athletic story which we want for the Boys' World. As a rule, we have not found that the story which revolves too closely about the game itself, is a success. Nearly every athletic story we receive shows how one boy wins out by playing the game fairly and proving loyal to his team. In most every case, the description of the game and the play is the big thing. Stories of this kind are practically all alike. When you have read one, you have read them all. We will be glad indeed to have the athletic story in which the game is but one episode in the plot. Make your message something bigger than how to play baseball or basketball." —L. E. D.

Trade papers, as a rule, do not care to print the same name above two different articles in one issue. A nom de plume is necessary.

Not long ago, I had occasion to send in three different articles that were suggested for a monthly trade paper. I did not expect they would be used all in one issue, so I sent only one pseudonym. When the articles came out, only two names were recognized as the ones I sent in; one, my true name; the other, my nom de plume. The third name was one I disliked. This incident taught me a lesson. Now I never send out a manuscript, without extra, fictitious names, that can be used, if necessary. I prefer my own selection.

Entering a contest, recently, unprepared so far as writing my name was concerned, except on the typewriter, made it necessary for me to type my name several hundred times. Under each slogan my name appeared in typewritten form. With the last one I breathed a sigh of relief, and made a vow to never go through the performance again. Why? Because it was unnecessary. The rule called for one's name with each slogan, but the name need not, necessarily, be typewritten. It must be plainly written, of course. How then, could it be done, without being typed, you ask. Easy. Use a rubber stamp. Never be without one. It will save hours of unnecessary typing of your name, not only when entering a name and slogan contest, but in addressing envelopes for return of manuscript, as well as stamping your name in the upper left-hand corner, or on the front or back flap of envelope ready for the mail.—F. C. A.

Dr. Brown's secretary writes re American Baptist Publication Society: "For your information would say that all manuscripts should be addressed to the Editorial Department, or to Dr. Owen C. Brown, Room 604, 1701-1703 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

"Every manuscript is entered on cards by me as opportunity offers, and once or twice a week given to

a reader. They are read as to availability and grouped for the different editors, who read them for *their* particular needs.

"We receive hundreds of manuscripts every week, and many are returned direct from the first reader, which accounts for some manuscripts being received by the author much sooner than others. It takes two or three weeks for them to get back to me as acceptances or returns. Once a month, towards the latter part, checks are sent in payment of manuscripts. Copies of periodicals are sent when printed."

The writer disclaims any attempt at originality. He is a free-lance who reads all he can get hold of concerning authors and editors, and the following are some extracts from his notebook which may be of interest to American writers.

Charles Dickens was an editor in his day, and asked for cheerful stuff. "We do not want articles on 'Graveyards' for the Christmas number of 'All the Year Round'. Send us, we pray you, something with a cheerful crackle in it!" Editors still ask for cheerful stuff.

I find that compositors, as well as editors, supply the diligent reader with pocket money. Even the most staid newspaper makes the funniest misprints at times, as when a county paper of the standing of the Yorkshire Post, in describing a royal wedding, informed its readers that the happy "pear" started on its "moneymoon".

Several popular weeklies give a dollar or half a dollar for little things of that sort.—J. E. W.

The editors of Life are very prompt and courteous in dealing with offerings, but it's not easy to hit their bull's-eye. Hence I was joyful lately when, in a week after sending, I received a check for $5.00 from them for a little 60-word skit.

The Boston Transcript pays $2.00 each for well-constructed cross-word puzzles. The editor is slow at decision, but the $2.00 comes eventually, as I have experienced.

In exceptional cases a letter to accompany manuscripts may be necessary, but as a rule I find it better to place the following words under the number of words at the top left-hand corner of the manuscript: "For consideration at your rates. Stamped and addressed envelope enclosed for reply". (Not necessarily for rejection, you see!).

I have appreciated articles in The Writer's Monthly, telling of the value of rejection slips, but I would like to mention the value of reading over every once in a while the bunch of *acceptances!*

I always keep these delightful objects in a place by themselves, and when I get blue or discouraged from the other kind, I get a real bracer for further work from going over, one by one, these reminders that I can write acceptably if I try hard enough!

I would like to learn from some "Experience Meeting" worker whether there really is any book

publisher willing to get out books of verse at his own expense. When one has had verse published for years in some of the best magazines and papers, it seems as if such a book might find a place, but I have yet to discover it.

Also I would like to know whether there are publishers willing to consider a book of collected short-stories and verses for children of from, say, seven to twelve years of age. More than one publisher has told me that children want one long continued story, and do not care for books of short-stories—that they do not sell well—but librarians in children's departments of a number of libraries say that according to their experience children read books of short-stories a great deal. —W. B. B.

The Bohemian Publishing Company, New York, publishers of the original Artists and Models, Self-Defense, Follies, and the new anti-blue-law magazine, Bootleg, is apparently in the fortunately small group of publications that sometimes assign an article to a writer applying for a position, or for free-lance work "to see what you can do", but with no intention of paying for the article if published. They consider it a favor for a writer unknown to them to be given a chance to make their acquaintance. This point of view is rather unusual, and the writer customarily assumes that though he takes the risk of not pleasing he will be paid if his article is printed. Consequently it is well to make very definite arrangements with this company before doing work for them. —M. S.

Even better than the music-cabinet suggested as a manuscript file, is a phonograph-record cabinet, or a player-roll cabinet. Since the radio is so popular the other cabinets are in the discard and may be obtained at a nominal price if one hasn't an old one. A small can of chinese-red lacquer, a brush, and an hour when Pegasus is balking, and any writer can change a scarred old relic into a cheerful home for manuscripts.

Do not despise the "Letters to the Editor", the "Column" letters and the department letters sent in to the smaller magazines and papers. Read a few and see plots all waiting to be picked up and used. The writers of such letters have no other outlet for their thoughts, and with their thoughts are involved their lives' stories. Make use of them. They are "American Tragedies".

If you are only a woman, trade journals will buy from you, if you deliver the goods. It has seemed, from the articles in The Writer's Monthly, that the gentlemen had a monopoly on this branch of the profession. But even an automobile journal bought from me, and how well those Fisk people paid. As for radio, the New York Herald-Tribune, though paying on publication, does so at about a cent and a half a word. And, of course, pays the week following the publication of the story.—M. L.

The Word Page

Every now and then as I read I am suddenly impressed by the fact that I have not lately been using certain words that I have known for years but have for no explicable reason allowed to drift away from my active vocabulary. Those who believe in the value of a little note book kept close at hand for frequent use may find that a section headed "Words Not Lately Used" will prove stimulating. For example, I became aware recently that I was neglecting "adroit", while favoring "deft"; that "simulated" had quite dropped out of my usage, while "pretended" had not; and that I was rather too freely using "basic" when a variety of synonymous words and phrases were at my disposal.

The foregoing reflection leads me to say that the efficient management of the writer-mind must take into account forgotten or sleeping knowledge as well as the acquisition of new. In fact, as we delve into new fields we often come across a piece of information that long since had passed out of mind.

Examples of this truth are bound to arise when we examine the Greek, Latin and Saxon roots of words, either in some book devoted to etymology—and every serious student should own and use one—or in a good dictionary. It is slipshod for any author to content himself with merely looking up the meaning of a word; he has not done his duty to himself until he has made sure that he knows its origin. By all means form the habit of reading every line in the section devoted in the dictionary to a given word, for not only will you learn of its derivation but you will at times be surprised to find that several meanings attach to a word, whereas you have known of only one or two.

The proper form in which to write the full name of a Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy is to insert the official title thus: John Cardinal Gibbons. The correct formal direct address is, "Your Eminence," and "His Eminence" for the third person.

I have now and then found the ecclesiastical term "curate" inaccurately used. *Cure* really means "the care of souls"—the spiritual meaning is the primary one, and the physical is derived from the spiritual denotation. Hence the French *cure*. Curate, the English derivative, originally meant any clergyman, but now the term applies correctly to the assistant of a rector.

When the Writer Reads

Over My Left Shoulder

Life has a way of making its own appraisals, and, in the case of authors, they do not always agree with their publishers' "blurbs", Such an evaluation has been placed on Robert H. Davis by the great army of magazine men and women by their having affectionately dubbed him "Bob"; and Bob he will always be.

In this panorama of men and events the veteran editor of Munsey's Magazine throws high and low lights on a fascinating procession of "all sorts and conditions of men", from authors to actresses, cowboys to cartoonists, and pugilists to politicians—to perpetrate an anticlimax. Most of these little narratives first appeared in a "colyum" in the New York Sun under the heading "Bob Davis Recalls", and the two longer chapters were published in Liberty Magazine.

Mr. Davis is a delightful raconteur, and informs all his reminiscences with the kindly spirit that made him for three decades the discoverer and encourager—almost the unpaid coach—of celebrities; particularly, of course, writers. However, these pages are not merely entertaining, though they are always that, but are now and again valuable for their bearing on little-known phases of the lives of public characters. D. Appleton and Company, New York.

Homes of Famous Americans
Vol. II

Some time ago the first volume of this series by Chesla C. Sherlock was given an extended review in these pages. All the praise accorded then to "Homes of Famous Americans" can be repeated conscientiously concerning the second book. The author's style is pleasing, the letter-press is beautiful, and the twenty-four full-page plates are clear and well chosen pictures of the homes described.

In this volume Mr. Sherlock, who is the editor of Better Homes and Gardens, Des Moines, Iowa, takes us on two-dozen agreeable journeys to the homes of such celebrities as Edgar Allan Poe, Israel Putnam, Dorothy Quincy, John Marshall, John Brown, and Patrick Henry, but he does not neglect popular latter-day favorites like the poet Whittier, Miss Alcott, John Burroughs, Walt Whitman, James Whitcomb Riley, Joel Chandler Harris, Mark Twain, and Theodore Roosevelt. The Meredith Publications, Des Moines, Iowa.

The Writer's Monthly

A Journal for All Who Write

Edited by
J. BERG ESENWEIN

Assistant Editors
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IMPORTANT NOTICES

Change of address must reach the publishers before the fifteenth of the month preceding issue, otherwise no number can be duplicated. Subscribers must give old address when sending in the new, specifically addressing the notice to The Writer's Monthly.

Return postage must accompany all regular articles intended for publication.

In no case can short items for the Departments be returned if unavailable.

Notice of accepted material will be sent promptly with payment on acceptance. However, items for "Experience Meeting" will be paid for only in shorter or longer subscriptions to *The Writer's Monthly*, to be sent to any desired person. Items of news will not be paid for.

Vol. XXIX March No. 3

"Despise not the day of small things," runs the old proverb, and it is a wise admonition. However, even the most astute of men could not compact into a single brief sentence more than one phase of a vital truth, and doubtless that is why proverbs are so often quoted in support of a short-sighted policy. We have the authority of Will Shakespeare for it that the Devil can quote scripture to his advantage, and we opine that that wily old chap must be equally skilled in the glib use of proverbs in support of half-truths.

For it is in their half-views that popular aphorisms may be made misleading. By stressing one important aspect of a matter the enthusiastic — betimes fanatical — devotee loses sight of the other side or sides, for truth has as many aspects as the eye of a bee.

"The day of small things" should indeed be not despised, but remembered—and openly acknowledged, at times—without reluctance. But if that day of small things should chance to be now, why, then we have an altogether different story, for the sooner we thrust it away from us by a vigorous push toward larger things, the better it will be for us. It is a lazy, unambitious philosophy that complacently says, "My attainments are small, but I mustn't despise them—perhaps some day I may learn more and do more."

Will someone of small gifts and small opportunities take these words as a sneer at their limitations? Let no one do so! Small attainments are never to be regarded with contempt; it is only small effort that we should despise in ourselves. So long as a man is doing his utmost, then he need not be ashamed of the results. There are a thousand things in life that are not to be evaluated by their bulk.

But here again we need to pause. What, after all, is a man's "utmost"? When we profess to be doing our best, what do we mean, honestly?

No one is doing his best who is not definitely preparing to do better. Our present best is not enough, by way of accomplishment. There must go with it some constant preparation for better work tomorrow, and all the tomorrows until the end of time. Not even an octogenarian need cease to prepare for larger things. Who has told you, O Man, that there is no growth, no service, no accomplishment, after you have passed over the Great Divide?

"Despise not the day of small

things"—but despise yourself if you are contented with it.

Man rises above the animal in proportion as he sets for himself standards, and adopts and actually uses devices to advance toward his goals.

Too many writers are content to long for improvement when the obvious way to procure their object is to set to work with diligence and system.

One of the very definite purposes of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY is to stimulate its readers to improve themselves. One means to this end is preachment, exhortation; but it will always remain a minor means. The chief services that this magazine can render are informative, and in line with this purpose we print from time to time suggestions for the utilization of time, of study-periods, of working methods, of marketing schemes, and all the rest that goes to make up the life of the writer, whether professional or amateur.

The great family that composes the increasing company of our readers is marked by one outstanding characteristic, and a lovely one it seems to us—the quality of kindliness. That is the tone, the temper, the spirit that both readers and editors insist must inform every editorial, every department, every contribution, down to the smallest item. Satire and fun we enjoy, for often the wholesomest lesson may be pointed with an arrow-head, but never a poisoned dart consciously leaves our bow. If an evil must be exposed, if an error must be corrected, the spirit in which it is pointed out may be forthright and vigorous, but not angry.

All this is said not to call attention to our virtues, "if any", as the cautious reporter said, but merely to make it plain that helpfulness and not excoriation is what we are aiming at in what we publish, and hence looking for in the articles that we read in manuscript.

It is our observation that those who read this periodical and others of similar purpose with a view to increasing their knowledge and improving their technique by even so small a matter as may be suggested in an "Experience Meeting" note, are the ones who grow.

In harmony with the foregoing comments let it be said that it has often excited our admiration to observe how freely our contributors open up the pages of their own experiences for the eyes of competitors. Is it not fine! Here is a man who has come upon a new way to unearth information in interviews, and here is a woman who has learned that information paragraphs would better be written thus instead of so. Do they chuckle as they hug this information to their own breasts, and make hay solely for themselves, while the sun is still in the meridian? Not they! They tell their brothers and sisters of the WRITER'S MONTHLY FAMILY all about it, giving chapter and verse, even though it may mean educating others to vie with them successfully. Again we say, it is a fine and generous spirit. If anyone argues that the age is growing more selfish let him be told of this one fact—a fact that is repeated in a score of different forms in every national trade journal and in every co-operative association. Truly, "the world do move."

Locke once said that the English have a beautiful language—which they keep in a book, and use slang wherewith to express themselves. The satire is deserved, and applies quite as pungently to us Americans. The only time to use slang is when we do so knowingly—and with discrimination.

H. C. S. Folks

Fannie Carter Aiken, Orange, Mass., had the following articles published in Laundry Age last year: "Weekly Newspaper Reminders Increase Business", "A Linen Lesson", "Do the Job Right for Best Results", and "Lost Opportunity". Mrs. Aiken also had several articles in a branch publication which is issued to laundry-owners by Laundry Age management.

The Inland Printer (Chicago) for January had an informative article by Louis F. Jordan of the Valley Virginian (Waynesboro), on "What Protection has Literary Property?"

"Peg-Legs' Release" in the January issue of The New Virginian (Norfolk, Va.) is by C. B. K. Palmer, Newport News, Va.

"Clearing the Main Line", boy's railroad story, by Charles W. Adamson, Aylsbury, Sask., appeared in the Family Herald & Weekly Star (Montreal) for October 6.

Virg Toncray Perkins (pen name), Forked River, N. J., is the author of "Wayside Cottage Affair", which appeared recently in The Chicago Ledger.

Public Official Magazine for December contained an article on the New York City Hall by Catherine Beach Ely, New York. Miss Ely writes, "Picture Story Paper has accepted and paid for all twelve of my articles on children and artists." A recent paragraph in the Paris issue of the New York Herald begins, "The most interesting of such studies has been passing round of late, being the work of Catherine Beach Ely in her finely composed book, 'The Modern Tendency in American Paintings.'"

"A Son of Israel", in the October issue of Our Missions (Techny, Ill.), and "A Christmas Healing", in the December issue of The Magnificat (Manchester, N. H.), are both by Ada C. Escousse, New Orleans, La.

Pearl Holloway, Fremont, Nebr., has an article on Hardware Stores and Christmas in the December issue of Electrical Goods; a missionary exercise, "Open the Door for the Children", in the February Sunday-School World (Philadelphia); a number of her recitations and exercises are in the Easter book of the Paramount series being brought out by Meyer & Brother of Chicago this spring, as well as in the Christmas book brought out last winter; and she was the winner of the first prize in the contest recently conducted by the publishers of Nelson Bibles for a comparison of versions of the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians.

Jean McMichael, Toronto, Canada, is author of the following material: a poem, "The Electric Lights of Broadway", with a full page illustration, in Edison Monthly for November; an editorial article, "Christmas Giving", in Olive Leaf (Rock Island, Ill.) for December 11th; a poem, "The Christ Child", in the December 18 issue of Olive Leaf; several poems in the December issues of Red Letter (Scotland); an article, "An Original Santa", and a story, "The Unexpected Santa Claus", in Family Herald and Weekly Star (Montreal) for December 22.

Starting Right to Write—Decorator: "Have you any suggestions for the study, Mrs. Newbook?"

Authoress: "Only that it must be done in brown. Great thinkers are usually found in a brown study.—Springfield Daily News.

In Boston—"This is little Waldo."

"Yes? And how old is he?"

"Nearly six."

"Can the little fellow write?"

"Oh, yes," said the proud mother, "but he has not as yet published anything."—Judge.

Anti-Floral—"I am getting a bit discouraged about my poem To a Daffodil."

"How come?"

"The last editor returned it with the request, 'Please omit flowers.' "—Ladies' Home Journal.

Encouraging Liberality—According to a Vermont paper a Scotchman was discovered wandering around in one of the towns up there with a pair of rumpled trousers over his arm. "Can I help you in any way?" asked a kindly citizen.

"Man," replied the Scot, who was evidently a newcomer, "I'm lookin' for the Burlington Free Press."—Christian Evangelist.

Just Like Some Writers—"Have you prepared your sermon for tomorrow?" asked our Southern friend of his man-of-all-work, who was also preacher at the African Methodist church.

"No, suh," said he; "I don't have to. Sometimes I preaches from a text. Then I got to study. Tomorrow I jest preaches from the extemporaneum."—Public Opinion.

The Lost Congressman—"What's the excitement in the Congressional Library?"

"Seems a Congressman wandered in."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Comforting—"De big pertaters are allus found on de top ob de heap," philosophized an old darkey, "but if it wa'nt fo' de rest ob us dere'd be no heap."—Christian Evangelist.

Auto-Suggestional—Teacher: "Give me an explanation of three punctuation marks."

Stude (in language of today): "A comma is the brake that slows down the speed, an exclamation point is an accident, and a period is a bumper."—Bobcat.

What is a Joke?—Recently an English paper asked its readers to define a joke. Here are a few of the best definitions received:

"A joke is something that you know is amusing—without musing."

"That which cheers but not infuriates."

"A funny account of something that never happened."

"A joke is a funny story originated by Noah, who preserved two in the Ark. They are still in circulation."

Where To Sell

Every endeavor is made to secure accurate information regarding markets, but no guarantee is given of accuracy, nor is any responsibility assumed for operations based upon information given. Our readers are urgently asked to send information of new markets, suspensions, and prize contests.

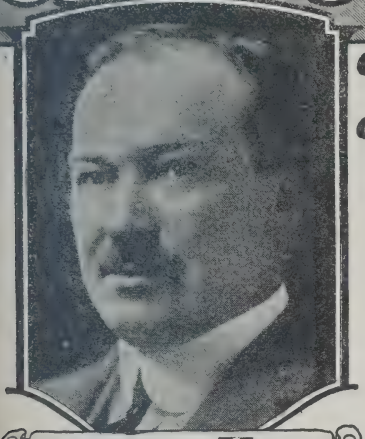
PRIZE CONTESTS

The Youth's Companion, Boston, is conducting a Junior Fiction Contest, in which it offers a first prize of $500 and second and third prizes of $200 and $100 respectively, for the best original short-stories in English, written by any boy or girl in the world between fifteen and twenty years of age, inclusive. Beginning with the January 21 issue, one of the competing stories will be published in each issue, along with the other fiction in The Youth's Companion. These stories will be paid for upon acceptance, and will remain eligible to win one of the three prizes. Stories must be from 1500 to 4000 words, not shorter or longer. Stories must be typewritten, on one side of the page, and with a space between the lines. The most desirable size of paper (which must be white) is about 8½ x 11 inches. Each story must be certified as original by the parent, teacher, college instructor, minister or family physician of the author; and the full name and address of the certifier must be given. No letter shall be enclosed with the manuscript; but the manuscript must bear the author's full name and address on the upper right-hand corner, and must be signed by the author, in ink, at the foot of the last page. Return postage stamps should accompany each manuscript. If they are not sent, the manuscript will not be returned. Ordinary care will be given to all manuscripts, but their return cannot be guaranteed. The author should follow usual practice, and retain a carbon copy. Manuscripts bound in decorative binders of any kind, or hand illuminated or illustrated in any way, will be automatically disqualified. All manuscripts are to be mailed, on or before April 15, 1927, to The Secretary, Junior Fiction Contest, The Youth's Companion, 8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass. The Youth's Companion will retain all rights to manuscripts which are successful. This applies both to the winners of the three prizes and to all others which are bought by The Youth's Companion. Unsuccessful stories will remain the property of their authors. The Board of Judges consists of William Allen White, Elsie Singmaster, and John Clair Minot.

The American Arbitration Crusade, 114 East 31st St., New York, is conducting a campaign to arouse all peace-lovers to redoubled efforts to prevent war, and in order to stimulate interest the following prizes are offered: $100 for the best letter, editorial or article appearing in any publication having at least 5000 circulation; $100 for the best public demonstration or concerted endeavor for obligatory arbitration; $100 for the best slogan; $100 for the best cartoon; $100 for the best sermon. The main idea must be arbitration in each instance. All contests will close on July 4, 1927. Any letter, editorial, article, cartoon or slogan may be used by the Crusade immediately to obtain further publicity.

The Woodrow Wilson Foundation announces a special donation by which it offers two Woodrow Wilson Awards of $25,000 each to the young men and young women of America for the two best

Short-Story Writing



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"There is a theory, almost as widespread as it is erroneous, that any person of intelligence and fair education can write fiction without special training. I tried this theory out quite conscientiously years ago but couldn't get past the editors with a single story. Perhaps that is responsible for my being in Congress!

"Writing is a highly skilled craft in which I hope some day to gain proficiency. It has a technique which must be laboriously learned, but if the labor is expended under the guidance of an expert, there will be returns in power for every ounce of energy invested.

"Dr. Esenwein is a practical teacher who never loses sight of the ideal. And his course is such a joy! It was paying me financial returns before I was a third of the way through it, but if it never paid a cent the pleasure would be worth many times the price of admission."

William N. Vaile

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articles of 2500 words on "What Woodrow Wilson Means to Me". Each award will be given for the article which most intelligently carries out the title chosen for both Awards. The article is to be strictly confined to an exposition of Mr. Wilson's ideals and principles and what they mean to the writer. The purpose of the Awards is to bring to the young people of the United States a closer knowledge of the ideals and principles of Woodrow Wilson: the ideals which, in his written and spoken words, he sought to express to the people of his own country and the world. No mere biographical sketch of Mr. Wilson or review of his life or acts will be eligible. Since only his ideals and principles are to be considered, no article must rest on a political basis or be colored by partisanship, for or against. The Awards are available to any resident of the United States who has reached his or her twentieth birthday, and who has not passed his or her thirty-fifth birthday. An article may be submitted by an individual or jointly by a group or organization either existent or specially formed, provided the age limit of members is strictly observed. Such an article must be submitted in the name of the group or organization. The total number of words of any article must not exceed 2500. Articles must be typewritten, and written only on one side of the paper. No articles must be sent rolled. Only one article may be submitted by any one contestant. No letter should accompany an article. No article must bear the name of the author, either on the article or on the envelope, nor must anything be contained on manuscript or envelope to give identity to the author. A plain, sealed envelope attached to the manuscript must contain the full name and address of the contestant and an accompanying affidavit from father, mother, legal guardian, minister, employer or Notary Public that the contestant's age is not below 20 or above 35 years. For the purpose of correct correspondence, a woman contestant should indicate whether she is single or married. The article must be strictly original. No lengthy quotation must be included. No manuscript will be returned under any circumstances, and no correspondence regarding submitted manuscripts can be answered. All articles must be received at the office of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, on or before October 1, 1927, and must be carefully addressed to The Woodrow Wilson Foundation Award, 17 East 42nd St., New York City, New York. All rights of whatsoever nature, such as publication rights or otherwise, shall be vested in the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, which shall have given to it by the act of submisson by the contestant the full right to permanent possession of the article submitted. No rights can be reserved.

W. B. Foshay Company, Inc., Minneapolis, Minn., is conducting an advertising contest, the purpose of which is to gather original ideas, suited or readily adaptable to make their aims and activities well-known to the public. For such ideas, $2500, first prize; $1000, second prize; $500, third prize, and ten prizes of $100 each will be awarded. In addition, the W. B. Foshay Company is prepared to purchase for a suitable amount, advertisements recognized by the judges as worth-while, even though they are not listed as prize winners. If two contestants submit the same ideas, each will receive the prize tied for. Every ad should carry the Foshay border and the Foshay signature, as well as the Foshay slogan—"All Your Money—All the Time —On Time". All copy must be centered on one dominant thought which covers their business of financing, controlling and managing public utilities and industrials and the distribution of securities. All advertisements, books or folders must be original. The advertisements may be illustrated or not, according to the taste of the contestant. The advertisements should be submitted in a way that will protect them from damage. They will not be responsible for manuscripts lost in the mails. Send all advertisements to Contest Editor, W. B. Foshay Company, Foshay Bldg., 826 Second Avenue South,

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Minneapolis, Minn. Contestants are not limited to any number of entries. All contestants must have their entries reach W. B. Foshay Co. not later than April 30, 1927. Prize winners will be announced June 1, 1927.

The Infantry Journal, Washington, D. C., will award a prize of $1500 for the best music for "The Infantry Song". The object of the contest is to produce original music, in march time, that will be suitable for a song (with chorus) for the Infantry. The music should be simple, catchy and capable of being learned readily by the rank and file, and at the same time stirring and full of pep, but free from jazz. There is no limit on the number of entries submitted by any contestant. Citizens of the United States, or those who have declared their intentions to become citizens, are eligible. Manuscripts must be legibly written. The melody must be arranged for piano or for band. Words suggested for the song may accompany the music. Contestants will be required to subscribe to all conditions of the contest on approved form, furnished upon request by the Infantry Journal, Infantry Bldg., Washington, D. C., before entry or entries will be accepted. The usual rules concerning nom de plume will be adhered to. Only the name of the successful competitor will be published. The music judged the winner of the contest will become the property of the U. S. Infantry Association, which reserves all rights to publication. No general distribution or sale will be made until suitable words for the music, approved by the Executive Council, shall be announced. A royalty will be paid the composer. Contest closes at noon, July 1, 1927.

The Pioneer, 113 Tradd St., Statesville, N. C., announces the Ann Spencer Penn Poetry Contest, which has five classes open to residents of North Carolina. For the best thirty-two line lyric, a first prize of $10 and a second prize of $5; for the best descriptive poem of North Carolina scenery, a first prize of $10 and a second prize of $5; for the best sixteen-line lyric, and for the best Italian sonnet, a first prize of $5 each, and second prizes of $2.50 each; for the best twelve-line lyric, a first prize of $3.00, and a second prize of $2.00. Contests close July 1, 1927. Address all communications to the Editor of The Pioneer, 113 Tradd St., Statesville, N. C.

The Drama League of America, in order to foster the American drama, to aid the American theatre, and to encourage the American playwright, has organized four national contests in playwriting. These contests will be conducted through the colleges and the state centers of the Drama League and the Little Theatres. The winning full-length play will be produced by Brock Pemberton, prominent producer of New York; the Biblical Play by the Pilgrim Players of Chicago; and the one-act plays by the American Academy of Dramatic Arts of New York. All four will be published by the Play Department of Longman's Green & Company. The contests have been organized by Nathaniel Edward Reeid and will be under his general supervision. The contests are as follows: 1. College, Historical, One-Act. Only college students may compete; plays to be one-act in construction; themes must be incidents of American History, real or imaginary; treatment need not be historically accurate, but must be historically just. 2. Little Theatre, Experimental, One-Act. Anyone may compete; plays to be one-act in construction; themes must be unusual in conception and in treatment. 3. Biblical, Non-Sectarian, Any Length. Anyone may compete; plays may be one-act, full-length, or pageant in construction; themes must be based on incidents of either Old or New Testament; treatment must accord with Biblical traditions. This contest will be conducted directly by the national headquarters of the Drama League of America. 4. All-American, Full-Length. Anyone may compete; plays to be full-length in construction with any number of acts or scenes; any theme may be treated in any manner. All plays must be original and owned by the author, and

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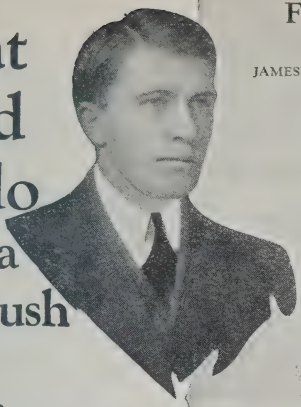

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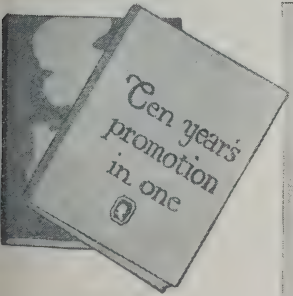

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must not previously have been produced or published professionally. The treatment may be in any manner—burlesque, farce, comedy, drama, melodrama, tragedy, or mystery. But neither material nor treatment may be offensive to good taste. One-act plays should require from twenty to forty minutes to perform; full-length plays, from two to two and one-half hours. Each play should be typewritten on one side of the sheet, with name and address of author, together with return postage, in separate sealed envelope attached. The author should keep one copy. Authors should send manuscripts to college, state center, or national headquarters without comment. The last day for handing in manuscripts is May 1, 1927. Each college or center will formulate its own rules for conducting its contest. The one best manuscript of each college and the five best manuscripts of each state center are to be sent to the State Judges not later than June 1, 1927. The State Judges will select the winning manuscript of each of the three state contests not later than July 1, 1927, and send them to the National Judges, c/o Play Dept., Longmans, Green & Company, 55 Fifth Ave., New York. Entrants to the Biblical contest will send their manuscripts direct to Drama League of America, 59 East Van Buren St., Chicago, Ill.

The Stanford Illustrated Review, an alumni magazine published at Stanford University, Calif., offers each month a cash prize of $25 for the most interesting article, of 1000 to 1500 words, on any subject having to do with Stanford University, or one of her alumni. Among the latter are such persons as Herbert Hoover, the president of the First National Bank of Wall Street, the mayor of Honolulu, the sheriff of Los Angeles, three presidents of great western universities, two U. S. senators, several congressmen, many eminent engineers, and a large number of fiction writers and journalists.

The Christian Century, 440 So. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill., is offering prizes of $50, $25, $15, and $10 for the best work appearing in their magazine for 1927. The judges will be Katherine Lee Bates, Mrs. Marguerite Wilkinson, and Mr. Edwin Markham.

The Contest Guide, St. Paul, Minn., announces the following winners in its November "Slogan-Letter" Contest: First prize, Miss Mary H. Strader, New York; second prizes, F. G. Davis, Ohio, C. W. Ehrhardt, Ky., Miss E. P. Van Hercke, Kans., Miss E. J. Hayler, Calif., George R. Beecher, Ohio; third prizes, Mrs. H. L. McCarthy, Mass., L. S. Mercer, Fla., H. A. Fenn, Penna., R. E. DeCou, Calif., A. E. Lemay, New Hampshire.

The Contest Guide, St. Paul, Minn., offers prizes for the best answers to the question, "What do you think is the best kind of contest and why?" A first prize of $10, three second prizes of a year's subscription each to The Contest Guide, and three consolation prizes of half-year subscriptions each, will be awarded. Only one entry to a person allowed. The answer is limited to 200 words, and will be adjudged by clearness, neatness, brevity and attractiveness. Entries should be received not later than March 14, 1927. Address Contest Editor, The Contest Guide, 714 N. Hamline Ave., St. Paul, Minn.

The New York Committee on Publicity Methods in Social Work announces a first prize of $300, a second prize of $150 and a third prize of $50 given by Arthur W. Page, membership chairman of the New York Charity Organization Society, for the best short stories submitted. Stories may be entered by any individual or organization. Every story submitted must be an original work and shall not have been previously published. The purpose of the contest is to stimulate the general reader's understanding of points of view and processes of social work by presenting them in terms of recognizable human experience. Manuscripts will be judged, therefore, on

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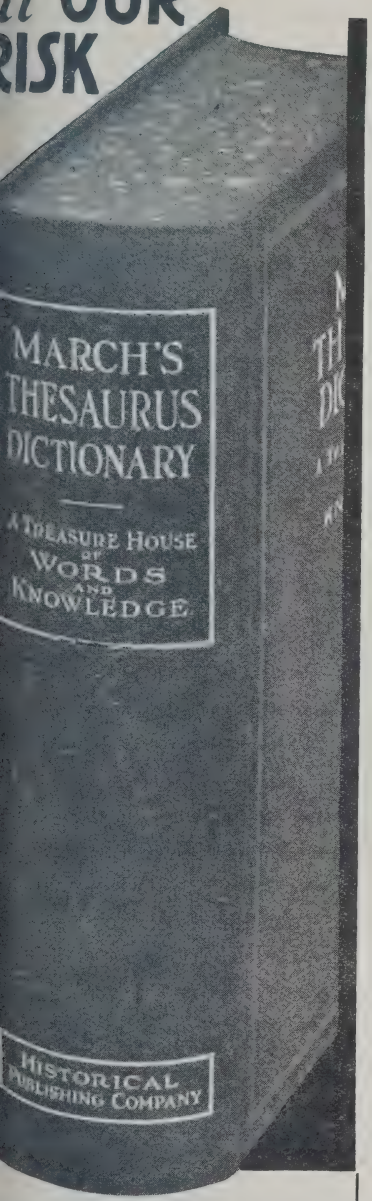

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their grasp of social work principles and on those qualities—plot, characterization, and dialogue—which determine "reader interest". Children's stories and allegories will not be considered. The treatment may be realistic or critical. Manuscripts must not be more than 5000 words in length. The prize winning stories, as well as all other stories submitted in this contest, shall remain the property of the authors. The committee will cooperate in securing the publication of prize winning stories. All manuscript must be typewritten double spaced and and must be mailed flat. Manuscript must not be signed with the real name of the author, but with a pen name. Neither the author's address nor any other indication of identity may appear on the wrapper or the manuscript. Accompanying each manuscript shall be a sealed envelope bearing on the outside the title of the story and the pen name of the author. The envelope shall contain an enclosure bearing the title of the story submitted, both the real and pen name, and the address of the author. The sealed envelope should also contain postage, if the author wishes the manuscript returned. Manuscripts should be addressed to Mrs. Gertrude Springer, Short Story Contest Committee, 151 Fifth Ave., New York City. Manuscripts must be received not later than noon of April 12, 1927. Announcement of the winning story will be made at a dinner to be held in Des Moines, May 17th, in connection with the National Conference of Social Work. The judges for the contest are Will Irwin, Paul W. Kellogg, and Margaret Widdemer.

The Independent Order Brith Sholom announces its second annual prize story contest for the best short stories of Jewish interest. A first prize of $75; a second prize of $50; a third prize of $40; and a fourth prize of $25 will be given. In addition, $10 will be paid to each other story accepted and used. The manuscripts should not be less than 2500 words nor more than 3500 words. Stories must be signed by an assumed name. Enclosed with submissions must be a sealed envelope, on the outside of which there must be written the assumed name of the contestant, and enclosed in the envelope a paper containing (a) name of contestant (b) address (c) age. All contributions must reach Independent Order Brith Sholom, 506 Pine St., Philadelphia, Penn., not later than April 20, 1927. The right to publish all stories submitted is reserved. The judges of the contest are: Lester Cohen, author of "Sweepings"; Thyra Sampter Winslow, author of "Show Business"; Wm. R. Langfeld, contributor to literary journals.

The following prize contests, alphabetically arranged, are still running. Full particulars have been given in previous issues, but details are repeated here.

Adventure, Spring and Macdougal Sts., New York, offers an annual prize of $100 for the best poem published by them during the year.

The American Magazine, 250 Park Ave., New York, offers a monthly prize contest for the best letters of not over 400 words on a given subject. Prizes are $30, $20 and $10. Subject changes each month. Contest closes the 20th of the month.

The American Rifleman, 1108 Woodward Bldg., Washington, D. C., offers a prize of $100 for the best hunting or shooting story received during the year, paying $10 for each story printed.

American School Citizenship League announces its World Essay Contest for 1926-27, which is open to students of all countries. Two sets of prizes, to be known as the Seabury Prizes, are offered for the best essays on one of the following subjects: Open to Students in Normal Schools and Teachers Colleges—"The Teacher an Agent of International Goodwill." Open to Seniors in Secondary Schools—"How the Youth of the World Can Promote International Goodwill."

THEY SAY!

that we have no market for plays! To disprove this report which has been circulated upon misinformation, we are offering you excerpts from two letters from Guy Hickman, owner and manager of The Hickman Stock Co., of Portland, Oregon:

". . . . . Your play 'Faith and Mary Ann' (written by Ted and Virginia Maxwell) went over nicely, and proved another good pleaser for me. I have used plays written by all of them, big and little, but never before have I used so many plays from one house. I can't take care of my business any night; they simply fight to get in . . . . . Your 'Jest Plain Mary' (written by Ted and Virginia Maxwell) is a knockout! All I can say is, Thank Heaven, the Maxwells know how to write plays that an audience wants; keep the good work up, and soon you will not be able to supply the demand for your plays." Guy Hickman, Ritz Hotel, Portland, Oregon.

Mr. Hickman is only one of the many managers to whom we are constantly leasing plays by unknown playwrights. (We so designate any playwright who has not had a New York production of one of his plays.) Mr. Hickman is unaware of the fact, but the demand for the type of play we write has already surpassed our ability to supply it, and it is because of this we have written Maxwell's Play Technique, in order that we may be instrumental in advising other unknown playwrights how to construct plays for our market.

We lease plays to the repertoire and stock companies, tent shows, show boats, and amateur organizations. The stock companies pay a royalty of from ten to fifty dollars a presentation; the repertoire companies pay a royalty of from one to two dollars and a half a performance, contracting, and paying in advance for a season of from twenty to thirty-five weeks. There are innumerable stock and repertoire companies leasing the same plays from our office.

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The Blue Book Magazine, 36 South State St., Chicago, Ill., offers five monthly prizes of $100 each for the best "actual fact" stories of true experiences in the following special fields—Adventure, Mystery, Business, Sport, Humor. Stories should not exceed 2000 words and should be shorter, if possible. Address contributions to True Experience Editor, The Blue Book Magazine.

Chautauqua Institution offers through Mr. C. C. Birchard, Boston music publisher, a prize of $1000 for the best religious cantata for adult mixed voices and piano accompaniment. The work must be approximately thirty minutes in length, and the text may be from any source not covered by copyright. If a new and unpublished text is used, the composer must present satisfactory evidence of his right to use the same. Manuscripts must be sent anonymously, accompanied by a sealed envelope containing marks of identification. Compositions submitted must not have been published or publicly performed. Competition closes April 1, 1927. All manuscripts must be sent to Prof. H. Augustine Smith, Boston University, 20 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.

The Chicago Trust Company offers annual prizes of $300 and $200 for the two best manuscripts on original research in business and finance. The competition is open to bank employes, and students of banking, commerce or law. In addition to these prizes, there is a triennial research prize of $2500 for an unpublished study, submitted in competition, which is considered to contain the greatest original contribution to knowledge and advancement in the field outlined. This award will be made in the autumn of 1927. Papers should be sent not later than June 1, 1927, and should be addressed to Professor Leverett S. Lyon, Professor of Economics, Robert Brookings Graduate School of Economics and Government, 1724 I Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

The Crowell Publishing Company, as publishers of The Woman's Home Companion, and **The John Day Company, Inc.,** will award $50,000 in prizes for the two most interesting, well-written novels best adapted to serial and book publication. The Crowell Publishing Company will pay $20,000 for the winning novel written by a man, and a like sum for the winning novel written by a woman, for the first American serial rights. The John Day Company will pay $5000 for the United States and Canadian book rights of the winning novel written by a man, and a like sum for the winning novel written by a woman, as advance payment on account of royalties. A competitor may submit more than one manuscript, but each must be entered separately. All manuscripts submitted must be original unpublished works written in English. Translations will not be eligible. No manuscript containing less than 50,000 words should be submitted; preference will be given to manuscripts of full novel length. All manuscripts must be addressed to "Novel Competition," c/o The John Day Company, 25 West 45th St., New York City. A printed agreement, which will be sent on request, must be mailed in a sealed envelope marked "Novel Competition" at the same time the manuscript is submitted, together with sufficient postage for return of manuscript. Competition closes July 1, 1927.

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The Granite Monthly, Newport, N. H., offers prizes of $15, $10 and $5 for the best short-stories submitted. Write for details to The Editor, Granite Monthly, Newport, N. H.

Harper's Magazine, 49 E. 33rd. St., New York, announces its second annual intercollegiate literary contest, for the best pieces of English prose written by undergraduates in American colleges and universities. First prize, $500; second prize, $300; third prize, $200. Manuscripts to be eligible, must be the original work of enrolled students in any of the undergraduate departments of American colleges and universities. They must be written in prose, but may be stories, essays, articles, or any other form of prose work suitable for magazine publication. Translations or adaptations are ineligible. The limit of length is 7000 words in the case of stories, 4000 in the case of articles, essays, etc. Manuscripts which have been published elsewhere than in a college magazine or newspaper are ineligible. No competitor may submit more than one manuscript. The manuscripts shall be mailed to Intercollegiate Literary Contest, Harper's Magazine, 49 East 33rd St., New York, not later than midnight on March 5, 1927.

Hart, Schaffner & Marx, Chicago, offer annually prizes amounting to $2000 for the best studies in the economic field. The prizes are divided as follows: Class A—first prize, $1000; second prize, $500. Class B—first prize, $300; second prize, $200. Class A includes any resident of the United States or Canada, without restriction. Class B includes only those who, at the time papers are sent in, are undergraduates of any American college. Subjects for studies are suggested, but any other subjects may be chosen, if approved by the Committee. Manuscripts should be inscribed with an assumed name, the class in which they are presented, and accompanied by a sealed envelope giving the real name and address of the competitor, together with any degrees or distinctions already obtained. If competitor is in Class B, the sealed envelope should contain the name of the institution in which he is studying. Contributions should be sent to J. Laurence Laughlin, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill., on or before June 1, 1927. Further particulars and a list of subjects already approved by the Committee may be obtained from Mr. Laughlin.

Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce is offering four prizes for the best authentic historical pageants submitted, portraying the history of Hot Springs dating from the arrival of the Spanish explorer, Ferdinand DeSoto, in 1541, to the present day. The pageant will be staged to celebrate the 100th birthday of Hot Springs National Park in 1932. The first prize consists of $1000 cash; second prize, a free trip to Hot Springs with hotel entertainment for one week; fourth prize, free transportation to Hot Springs. The contest is open for twelve months, and anyone may submit scenarios. Address Centennial Celebration Club, P. O. Box 886, Hot Springs National Park, Ark.

The Hudson Theatre, New York, is presenting "The Noose", a melodrama by Willard Mack, based on a story by H. H. Van Loan. Although not a mystery play, the climax of the drama hinges upon a mysterious telephone call, and the situation has aroused so much discussion that "The Noose" Company is offer-

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Life Cartoon Comedies, 598 Madison Ave., New York, will pay $50 for each scenario or idea they can use for their comedies, now being released by Educational Film Exchanges, Inc. Each of these comedies is five hundred feet (about half a reel) in length, and is crammed with as many humorous ideas, or "gags", as can possibly be included in that limited space. Ideas do not have to be in scenario form, nor is it even necessary to work out a complete story. They will pay full rates for one humorous idea—one "gag"—that they can use. Manuscripts should not exceed five hundred words in length.

The Tanager, Box 66, Grinnell, Iowa, offers a prize of $25 for the best poem submitted by its author before April 1, 1927. The poem may be of any type except a translation, but must not already have appeared in print.

True Story Magazine, 1926 Broadway New York, is offering $10, $5 and $3 each month for the best letters stating why readers do or do not like the different features in each month's issue, and offering suggestions for improvement. Contest closes the 15th of each month. Address the Editor.

The United Daughters of the Confederacy is offering the Mrs. Simon Baruch University Prize of $1000, to be awarded biennially, for the purpose of encouraging research in the history of the South, particularly in the Confederate period. The competition is limited to undergraduates and graduate students of universities and standard colleges in the United States and those who have been students in such institutions within the preceding three years. The prize will be awarded for an unpublished monograph or essay of high merit in the field of Southern history, preferably in or near the period of the Confederacy or bearing on the causes that led to the War Between the States. If no essay of high merit shall be submitted in any competition the prize will not be awarded for that year. It is expected that essays will comprise not less than 10,000 words and it is preferred that they be of considerably greater length. Essays in the first competition must be sent before September 1, 1927, to Mrs. Arthur H. Jennings, Chairman, 2200 Rivermont Ave., Lynchburg, Va. The first award will be in November, 1927, and the awards thereafter will be every second November.

The Witter Bynner Undergraduate Poetry Prize of $150 for the best 200 lines of poetry is again being offered by Mr. Bynner under the auspices of the Palms. Only undergraduates in an American college or university may compete. A single poem or a group of poems may be entered, but only 200 lines will be considered. Poems previously published elsewhere than in college magazines will not be eligible in the contest. The chosen poem will be published in Palms. The manuscripts must be typewritten in triplicate, and each sheet must bear the name and address of the contestant, together with his college. All entries must be mailed by March 31, 1927, to Witter Bynner, Box 1061, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The World's Work, Garden City, L. I., N. Y., is offering a prize of $1000 for the best article based upon the theories advanced by William T. Foster and Waddill Catchings, in the series of economic articles which began in World's Work for September and will continue through February. Articles should not exceed 4500 words. Contest closes March 31, 1927.

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MISCELLANEOUS

The Echo, 1837 Champa St., Denver, Colo. Monthly. Editor, David Raffelock, reports: "We are now paying the standard rate of $10 for each short-story accepted, in addition to the three yearly prizes."

Southern Automotive Dealer, Grant Bldg., Atlanta, Ga. Monthly; 10c; $1.00. Editor, T. W. McAllister. Only journal devoted to automotive trade of South. Circulates among southern dealers and distributors of automobiles, motor trucks, tires, and accessories. Reports: "Material desired from contributors includes news of interest to the trade; articles describing the business methods of unusually aggressive dealers whether located in cities or in cross-road towns — dealers, for instance, who are especially progressive in advertising, in handling their service departments or parts departments, in selling used cars, in handling sales, in building business on tires and accessories, etc. Photographs or other material for illustrating contributions should always accompany articles describing certain dealers and their methods. Also, photographs alone, when showing especially attractive automobile salesrooms, exteriors, tire or accessory display fixtures or window displays of tires or accessories are desired. Contributions are passed upon within a few days after they are received, and payment is made immediately following publication. Space rates vary in accordance with actual value of material received—but are liberal enough to interest the best contributors."

The Business Woman, 40 Richmond St., West Toronto, 2, Ont., Canada. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, Mary-Etta Macpherson. Reports: "Well-written articles about interesting persons will be considered; brief fiction under 2000 words, savoring of smartness, will be welcomed. Preachments and pronouncements carefully avoided. Stories of successful women, their reasons for success, their hobbies, their peculiarities, their humor, will be acceptable. Photographs used. Material reported on within two weeks, and payment made on publication."

Save the Surface, 18 East 41st St., New York. Monthly. Editor, Gertrude Woodcock. Use 1000 word articles featuring effects of painting, or of lack of paint; labor saving; beautifying home, etc. Photographs of houses before and after painting; neglected houses; good interiors. Some topical verse referring to paint or varnish. Payment on publication, 1½c to 3c a word.

Fur Age Weekly, 47 W. 34th St., New York. Weekly; $3.00. Editor, L. M. Bookbinder. Reports: "In the market for NEWS about fur retailers and fur departments of department stores. Keep in touch with the fur buyers and find out what they are doing and selling. Send along a snapshot (borrowed) of each one interviewed. We are running a lively, tabloid newspaper with the accent on the NEWS. Rate: one cent a word; $2.00 a picture. Payment on acceptance. This offer holds for cities outside of New York, Boston, Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia—where we have regular correspondents."

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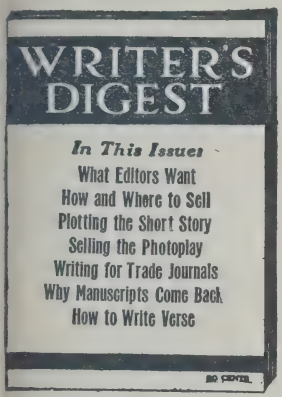

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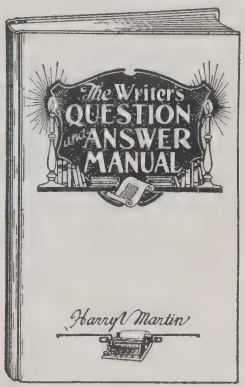

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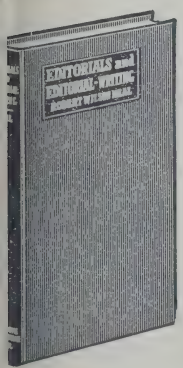

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Answers To Inquiries

M. Y., Cincinnati, Ohio—We have had a number of inquiries asking what a biographical novel consists in. There is no standard definition, because there are several types of biographical novels, however, the general statement may be made that a biographical novel is the fictionized life of an actual person. Years ago Louisa Muhlbach wrote some fictionized lives that were exceedingly popular in that day. Lately, a new type of fictionized life has come into being. "Ariel", which is a life of Shelley, and "The Divine Lady", a fictionized life of Lady Hamilton, may be cited. These novels are romantic interpretations.

Apart from fiction, biographies are being written nowadays that are not fiction, yet are not standard or unbiased biographies of the old type, and that have some fictional or semi-fictional features. Just how far a writer should go outside known facts in writing a fictionized biography, or how far an author may arrange the known biographic facts to suit his own requirements in the writing of a biographical novel, must be left to the author himself. A strict adherence to ethics would bind the author not to foist on his chief character anecdotes or characteristics that did not belong to him, nor to twist the emphasis in such a way as to distort either romantically or satirically the main course of action of his character's career. In the case of very well-known persons, the actual facts of their lives have usually been established through regular biographies—straight biographies. There is always a difference between the fictional treatment of a scene or incident and a factual treatment. In the first case, the writer's interest is in the acts of the characters themselves. In the other case, the interest is in the exposition of certain facts about the characters.

It goes without saying that a historic figure has already been so fully written about that there are grave difficulties in the writing of a biographical novel about him. One way out for the writer who does not care to deal with a historic figure might be to deal with a person who was not well-known, but who was typical of a large number of people in the given period in history that is being dealt with. There is a great deal of interest today in the period between 1870 and 1890. The manner of treatment that is popular is rather satirical.

R. B. F., Wichita, Kansas. Whenever you are revising a manuscript that has already been typed, and you do not wish to retype the whole, you may insert extra pages by using the same sized paper, and if possible, the same quality paper as used in your original manuscript. Suppose you need to insert a passage in the middle of page 9: Simply re-copy page 9 down to the point where you wish to make the insertions, then type the added passages, and continue to the bottom of page 9, which in this case will involve a new page. So as not to confuse the editorial reader, type at the bottom of the new page 9, "On to page 9-A". Then type at the bottom of the second new page that you have written, "Page 9-A". If, as will probably be the case, the new material on page 9-A will not completely fill the page, type at the bottom of that new page the following: "On to page 10".

A JOURNAL FOR ALL WHO WRITE

The Writer's Monthly

APRIL, 1927

"LAUGHTER, INC."

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Springfield, Mass.

The Writer's Monthly

A Journal for All Who Write

Volume XXIX APRIL, 1927 Number 4

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APRIL, 1927 Volume XXIX, No. 4

The Writer's Monthly

"Laughter, Inc."

Sherman Ripley

It is the Specialty of the Writer to Get the True Inwardness of All Things and Laughter Needs to be Dissected With the Rest

LAUGHTER pays dividends. The reason for this is plain: everybody wants to laugh, with the possible exception of the professional humorist. One hardly expects him to be cheerful. After one of Mark Twain's lectures, the presiding officer, a prominent lawyer, came forward with his hands in his pockets and observed, "Isn't it strange to see a humorist who is really funny?" Instantly Mark Twain countered: "And doesn't it seem unusual to see a lawyer with his hands in his own pockets!"

Humor is popular. Nowadays laughter is good for both the soul and the lining of the pockets. Even the motion picture "heavies" and dramatic stars of both sexes are turning to comedy. Thus "We're in the Navy Now" is starring Wallace Beery—a far cry from King Richard the Lion-Hearted to a half-witted sailor. We see Norma Talmadge in "Fifi", Lewis Stone in "Midnight Lovers", John Barrymore now finishing a comedy based on the life of Villon; and so it goes.

The world is full of laughs—we meet some of 'em every day, and no doubt we look just as funny to them. The sadder life is, the funnier it seems to the bystanders.

Mere wit, we know, appeals to the intellect; but humor is broader, less clever, more human. Wit may be clever, "but is it art?" On the other hand humor may degenerate into low comedy; very, very low, sometimes, more's the pity.

What is really funny? What makes people laugh? Webster defines "laugh" as: "a convulsive sound caused by merriment"—laugh that off! What constitutes humor is a question that can never

be answered with exactness, because its a *relationship* between an object and the mind that perceives it —and this relationship varies as the mind of the receiver. The same is true of beauty.

That which amuses your nine-year-old boy merely bores you, and what you enjoy he cannot comprehend: perhaps it is just as well. When we consider how many adults —in picture-shows, for instance— seem to have the mental receiving-stations of twelve-year-old children, we no longer wonder at the popularity of pastry, spaghetti and seasickness in so-called comedies. It is surprising that we do not have more seasickness in the audience.

The right sort of humor presents a growing opportunity for writers. From both the pictorial and the literary angles we find certain principles of legitimate comedy. These are perennially guaranteed to produce merriment that will motivate the convulsive sound mentioned so beautifully above.

Thus we have always with us:

Grief—For the other fellow. There is nothing funnier than some dignified and rather obese individual sliding helplessly down a tin roof into a rain-water barrel. Hard luck is a terribly funny thing—to others—when you have it.

Inversion—Pictures, sketches and articles are very effective where everything is inverted and impossible. For instance, where the sexes are reversed, and the woman works, and hubby takes care of the children.

Anachronism—This is a very good word, and I use it as often as possible. Who can ever forget the late Sullivant's trogolytes and prehistoric animals in Life, generally with some modern application? The Adam and Eve joke generally has this motif; but Adam and Eve had this advantage over us: they never had to listen to jokes about Prohibition, and mothers-in-law. When I think of the jokes Adam and Eve didn't have to listen to, I am filled with remorse and envy.

The Impossible—The best examples of this type of humor are seen in the animated animal-cartoon comedies. In my opinion there is nothing funnier than one of these; absurdity carried to the Nth power, with the lid off. Life is soon to produce a number of these comedies, and they are running a continuous contest for scenarios. The prize is $50, the scenarios are to be less than 500 words in length.

Anticlimax—Editors seem to be partial to anticlimax. This applies particularly to light verse, where the last line transforms a poem of beauty into a poem merely of truth; perhaps the whole meaning of the poem is completely reversed by the last line or two. Dorothy Parker in The New Yorker and Life has done this sort of thing with striking success. The following poems illustrate the method. One is from Moon Shadows; Life bought the other.

POSSESSION

As one whose waking spirit struggles through
The cold enchanted mist of early morn
Until, but half-awakened and forlorn,

The glorious sun bursts on his startled
view,
So when your eyes flashed out to mine,
I knew
That somewhere in creation's misty dawn
Our souls had met and merged . . . .
and now, reborn,
You were my spirit-maid—a dream come
true.
Remember how we wandered hand in
hand,
Utopian, above the world of men,
Resolved, my dear, that we would boldly
shatter
Conventions and elope to fairyland?
I would have scaled Parnassus for you
then—
But now that you are mine it doesn't
matter.

FOREVERMORE

I kissed my love a last good-bye
For ever and for aye;
The world stood still, and in the sky
The stars paused on their way,
And when at length she closed the door
My heart was but a tomb;
Our parting was forevermore
Until the dawn of doom.
And as I stood in bitter doubt
I turned away, and then
I rang the bell and called her out
And said good-bye again.

Parodies—It is hard to sell a parody unless it is both timely and based on some very well-known poem. Editors hold that many of their readers never heard of the original poem, and therefore cannot appreciate the parody; and there is a good deal of truth in this. Some people, too, object to parodies on the ground that they injure the original poem, subjecting the muse to loud, raucous laughter, as it were. It would seem that if a poem were really great, no parody could injure it. Many famous poets delighted in writing parodies, and it certainly is excellent training in the art of versification. I wonder how many poets have read Kipling's parody of Browning's "Love Among the Ruins".

Here is a parody interesting because the first quatrain is exactly like the original poem:

THE HOOK

(With apologies to Sara Teasdale)

Strephon kissed me in the spring,
Robin in the fall,
But Colin only looked at me
And never kissed at all.
Streph's a politician now,
Rob's a lawyer grown,
Only Colin got the hook—
(I'm the Blarney Stone!)

Light verse is often built up from a joke, and such verse is not difficult to sell. But the danger is this: you are liable to pick up an antique joke. You know, the way they dress 'em up these days.....

Here is where the note-book habit pays. In conversation, while reading or writing, a comic idea will pop to the surface. Capture it! Jot it down, and later work it into a sketch or a verse; such material is salable. Reserve the big idea, the "kick", for the last lines, build up to a climax, then put a "sting in the tail" of it. For example:

THE LYRE

My friend the Poet often tells
(I never see 'em set in print)
How many epic poems he sells
For cash enough to swamp the mint,
Apollo claimed that with his Lyre
He charmed the birds and brooks until,
As each clear measure echoed higher,
All living nature felt the thrill!
Some lyre!

Good technique, like telling the truth, may be painful, but it pays in the end. Editors are often keen judges of good poetry. Your idea may be ever so funny, but if it

enters the editorial sanctum on limping feet—to the boneyard! I would recommend a study of "The Forms of Verse," by Untermeyer. Writing correctly-metered verse, like playing the saxaphone, is not entirely a gift of God; far from it!

Now as to the manuscript. It goes without saying that this should be scrupulously neat and exact, with no correction except by typewriter. Type your name and address in the upper left-hand corner, and sign each verse at the bottom in ink. Send three or four verses in each mailing.

Among the publications using good light verse and sketches are: Ainslee's, Everybody's, The New Yorker, Life, Judge, Laughter, Satire, Liberty, Saturday Evening Post, Droll Stories, Snappy Stories, and Breezy Stories. Then we have the outdoor, redblooded magazines, where men (because they fight like wild animals) are men. These use outdoor verse, and include Sea Stories, Adventure, Frontier, Danger Trail, and others.

Here is the logical method to follow: plenty of note-book planning, careful writing and rewriting, thoughtful study of the markets, and persistent, continuous mailing of manuscript to every possible source. This is the only way to make Laughter, Inc., pay dividends.

DEFENDS THE DIME NOVEL

The dime novel has a new defender in Commissioner of Education Ranger of Rhode Island. He maintains that instead of being harmful, as it is often said to be, the blood-and-thunder novel serves a very useful purpose. For example, it is Commissioner Ranger's opinion that it has "instilled the habit of reading in many cases where no other sort of literature would have possessed the necessary lure. I shall always believe," he continues, "that the yellow thriller is merely a state through which many of us pass and from which most of us, happily, emerge with souls intact."

Many youngsters who once hid the paper-back books to keep themselves from making an enforced trip to the woodshed have become famous despite their reading of such "trash." There were many, like Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt, who made no pretense of hiding their novels, even in mature years. The careers of such men lead to the assumption that the dime and nickel novels are not as bad as their covers are painted.—*The Pathfinder.*

Writing for Young People

Helen Sherman Griffith

The Second Article by an Author Who has a Score of Successful Books to Her Credit

IN my article on writing for little children I mentioned writing series of books. This can be done for any age of child, and, personally, I find it by far the most entertaining form of juvenile writing. By "entertaining" I mean entertaining to me, as the writer. I have some reason to believe, too, that the stories are entertaining to their readers, as well.

Several years ago I spent a winter in Boston, in order to take Professor Dallas Lore Sharp's celebrated course of lectures for professional writers, given under the Harvard University Extension Courses. It was a big class, having at least one hundred and fifty members, and after the lectures we would make one another's acquaintance and discuss what we had been told. One day a young woman introduced herself to me as Miss ———, of San Diego, California. Her family was wintering in the East and she was employing her time, most profitably, by taking this course. By way of opening the conversation she asked me, "And what have you written?" Well, to have such a question fired at one, point blank, is disconcerting. One forgets everything one has written. I hesitated and stammered, catching at my scattered thoughts. "Well, I've written the 'Letty Books'," I replied. Her answer was positive. "Oh, no, you couldn't have written those! Why, they are known all over the country."

As it happens, I did write the "Letty Books", and had a very pleasant ten years writing them—one a year. No, that is not exact, for I wrote the first two within a year.

It was like this: I wrote a book for little girls, and I called it "Patty and the Twins". I submitted it to the Penn Publishing Company, of Philadelphia, and in due time was requested to call "to see about the manuscript". In fear and trembling—with hope—I went. They told me that they were looking for a series of books for girls and thought my story would make a suitable beginning of such a series. I considered, and decided that, for a series, the book I had written would make a better second volume; that there should be a more explanatory story to begin the set. So I retired to my writing room—the hay-loft of our stable, which had been converted into a garage.

An artist friend and I had fitted it with sky-lights, old furniture and other studio equipment and called it Up-a-Loft. There I wrote, in less than a month, "Patty of the Circus".

After one edition of this was printed, it was discovered that there was another Patty series on the market, so we had to change our heroine's name. It was a serious matter. It really was. To begin with, I wanted a name that suited my little girl—a name that I felt would belong to her. Then I was limited in my choice, for the new name had to have just five letters, the same number as "Patty", so as not to change the book-plates. It was done, and "The Letty Series" was launched.

Parenthetically, names mean a great deal to me. When I assemble characters for a book, they must be satisfactorily named before the story can "march", as the French say. By "satisfactory" I don't mean euphonious names, or even that please my own fancy, but names that fit the characters they are to designate. For instance, when I began the series for little children, "Louie Maude: Her Books", my publisher objected to "Louie" for a name. I myself would not have chosen it for mere beauty or charm, for like Jinks in "No, Virginia" I like beautiful, soft-sounding names. But that particular name-combination belonged absolutely to my little girl, Louie Maude.

I have a habit—and I pass the suggestion on to other writers, as it is a most useful kink—of putting in my note-book any odd or unusual or harmonious name or combination of names I hear or see. I always read signs over shops in every town we motor through and have received dozens of valuable hints as to names and combinations of names. Often an odd twist in nomenclature will indicate character better than words of description; like Regina Mahoney in "Oh, Virginia".

In writing series of books there are a good many things to be considered. In every book, naturally, you must make your heroine a little older, and yet you can't let her outgrow the minds and tastes of the same readers. If one book appears each year, of course your readers are growing older, too, and you don't want them to outgrow their taste for your heroine. But you must remember that new little readers come on each year. Moreover, a series of books for girls should not encroach upon the novel, or they lose their juvenile character.

Another point is the reality of your characters. While you are writing about them you must think with them, act with them, *live* with them—and in them. Their trials must be yours and their point of view, that is, the point of view of your heroine, yours, while you are creating her.

They say that truth is stranger than fiction, and of course we have all been warned, time and again, not to submit a story with the comment, "This is absolutely true". In

a preface to his "Beau Sabreur", Percival Christopher Wren observes that he has received many criticisms of his various stories because of impossible episodes in them. To quote Mr. Wren: "Certain of the events chronicled in these books were objected to as being impossible. They were impossible. The only defense that the author can offer is that, although perfectly impossible, they actually happened".

In writing for the young it is advisable to avoid all truth that is stranger than fiction, for the sake of this very spirit of doubt. Young readers must believe, and they must believe without too great a stretch of their credulity.

For that reason, when saying that I have put incidents of real life—my own, my children's and others—into my books for girls, it is not to put forward a claim that they are more "real". The incidents I used were things that might have happened to anyone, or mischief that any healthy-minded, lively youngster might perpetrate.

When Jinks, in "No, Virginia", told little Sara Hartley stories about the various houses they passed on their walks, she was not planning mischief; it was the thought farthest from her mind. And yet rather serious consequences developed, consequences which, fortunately, resulted favorably for Jinks, since they helped her to escape from an environment of city streets and fashionable manners which she detested, to the freedom and healthy life of the country.

That element is a great asset to serial-writers, the turn that circumstances give to development; the widening circle of a carelessly-thrown stone, the kindling spark, the "great oaks from little acorns grow" idea. One's heroine can think or say or do in book number one something comparatively trivial—but something characteristic—and lo, toward the end of book number two or three, that little thought or saying or action may blossom and bear fruit, either of pleasant consequences or disaster, opening the way for the overcoming of further difficulties.

Naturally, in a series of books we must have conflict and suspense as necessarily as in the short-story. But what, after all, brings more conflict, more suspense, to the young than life itself? Give your heroine a happy disposition, a healthy appetite both for her meals and for adventure, and an intense zest for life, and you make a pretty good start.

Don't endow her with too many of this world's goods. Not nearly so many things happen to a rich girl—unless she be kidnapped, or her father fails in business just as she is about to enter a fashionable school (and other old stuff). I made "Jinks", heroine of the Virginia books, a poor little rich girl, but as her character is not that of the conventional, "girls of our set" type, I did not have much difficulty in getting her into trouble. To Jinks, things just naturally happened; the wrong things, I mean.

When beginning a series, it is as

well for the author to have a mental forecast of future books. The "Letty Series" was my first attempt, and with her I did not look very far into the future. To begin with, I had not expected to write more than four books in the sequence, but the publisher found that they "took" and I went on. If I had known there were to be so many books about Letty, I daresay I might have altered some of my premises concerning her actions and character. But, as events went, it was rather interesting, with a somewhat haphazard beginning, to see how things turned out. After all, life is like that.

My publisher and I had many, and not always amicable, discussions regarding Letty's future. We took it very seriously. In the third volume, "Letty's New Home" I introduced Mr. Jack Beckwith, a young man "just double Letty's age". That happened to make him thirteen years her senior, which is not such a vast difference in ages, is it?

But my publisher thought it was. During the writing of the very next volume he challenged me, "Are you planning to have Mr. Jack Beckwith marry Letty?" He was strongly against the match, of which, with Letty at the age of fourteen, he already had a prophetic inkling. He called Mr. Jack a "cradle snatcher", and all sorts of horrid names. Later on in the series I introduced Ross Gilchrist, a young Princeton student, and my publisher said with enthusiasm, "How about Ross Gilchrist? He's a mighty fine boy. Why can't you have him marry Letty?"

We discussed the matter; we corresponded about it. Two more volumes came out. Others took up the debate with us. I began to receive letters from my girl readers expressing their hope—in some cases a most flatteringly eager hope—that Letty was going to marry Mr. Jack. My own daughter said flatly that if Letty did not marry Mr. Jack she would not read the last Letty book. You see what a real matter it had become!

Just the other day, in going over some old papers, I came across a letter from my publisher which said, in part, "———you may let Letty marry whom she pleases; I withdraw all objections."

In writing a series of books, there are a few things about which one cannot be too careful. The main tendency to error is in miscalling the names of minor characters. For example: In the first volume, there arises the necessity of calling in a doctor. He is not essential to the story, and rather casually the author gives him a name, merely a sort of handle by which to get him in and out of the house. Unexpectedly, in a later book of the series it becomes expedient again to call in the same doctor, Dr. ———— let me see, what was his name? We think it was Robinson, and put it down so, hurriedly. The book goes to press and eventually to its readers. Letters begin to come to the author, sweet ones of praise; others accusing. These are most reproach-

ful, for an error has been discovered. In the first volume, Dr. Robinson's name had been Anderson, or Henderson. Those readers who have followed the books closely are hurt, disillusioned; their faith is shaken; the "realness" of the books is gone. This may seem a minor fault, but it really is a grave one. I have made it, myself, but fortunately I am possessed of daughters who read my books in the manuscript, and are quick to seize upon such slips and bring them to my notice for correction before the book goes to press. From the impression upon them, I have been shown how unforgivable such a slip is.

For this reason, among others, I find it most helpful, both to read over the book previous to the one I am about to write (and if it is the third or fourth of a sequence, to glance as well through the others preceding) and to make a complete list of all the characters that appear or are mentioned in the previous books, and refer to it frequently. Be careful, too, to remember your chief characters' tastes, preferences and habits. Don't let your heroine, in book number one, express a preference for pink, only to have her declare in book number three or four, that "blue has always been my favorite color". In other words, your heroine must be real; she must continue real; the tastes, habits, traits of character she exhibits in book number one must keep with her to the end. She must develop, naturally, and development signifies a certain amount of change; but she must develop along the lines indicated when we first met her. Keep her true to character.

In book number four of a sequence, growing up, the heroine may show a predeliction for sport, or for boys, which in book number two she had emphatically "detested". That is the normal change of development. But don't, in the first volume, give her the habit of, say, expressing sharp emotion of joy or sorrow by a tense clasping of the hands, only to have that gesture (absent-mindedly on the part of the author) said in a later volume to be a wringing of those same hands. One simply cannot be absent-minded about details. Children notice and remember characteristic gestures and habits.

And above everything, keep your readers interested in your heroine. All through this article I have spoken about heroine rather than hero. I do it unconsciously, because one can always speak best about what one knows best, and I have always written stories about girls. I am sure the same precepts would apply to stories for boys. As I say, keep your readers interested in your heroine, and keep her keen, eager, vital; keep her endowed with her real zest in life.

Writing Art Reviews

F. Gardner Clough

This is a Subject Never Before Discussed in Our Pages and One of Unusual Suggestiveness

THERE is one special form of writing that seems to be calling for recruits from among free-lance writers and journalists—I refer to the art review, or the art criticism.

This field offers more than a fair opportunity for any well qualified writer. Today the art reviewer's market is increasing, and we have two factors that make this so. There is an increasing number of art journals; there is also a growing interest on the part of the American public in the work being done by American artists. Consequently, newspapers today are giving more and more space to art notes, and the situation is such a healthy one that no general writer can afford to ignore the editorial demand for intelligent art "copy", if the field appeals to him. To those who need additional encouragement or proof it can be said that artists themselves are lamenting the fact that the United States has all too few initiated art reviewers.

When we speak of art reviews, it must be understood that this does not include the work being turned out by artists' press-agents; genuine artists are more anxious to welcome the spontaneous review and the intelligent, unbiased criticism, for they can always purchase a press-agent's copy after they have sold their first pictures.

How can the free-lance writer curry himself for art criticism? Does the work require a special training? Must the art reviewer be an artist? These are some of the questions that will come to the mind of amateur writers. While no definite answers can be given, certain facts and observations may be offered for those who are interested.

Apropos the art-reviewer's craft, I recall with what enthusiasm Alfeo Faggi, the sculptor, told me about a newspaper review of his work that appeared in a Chicago paper. "The reviewer isn't schooled in art," he said, "but her review is honest, and it shows a genuine interest in and appreciation of the work she is telling her readers about."

At the risk of appearing impractical, one might also repeat Richard Le Gallienne's boyish enthusiasm, as culled from "The Romantic Nineties," when he saw his first Poet in the flesh. "I had seen Shelley plain!"

I take it, the reviewer must have some such innate appreciation for art, although I am aware that oth-

ers will think such devotion pathological and fatal to the clear, cool judgment needed by the art critic. Again, our student of art criticism might well take heed of the very evident personal note in the "Poems I Love," being syndicated to newspapers by Charles Hanson Towne. Even though these verses are selected from a wide range, there is evident in the selection, and the brief expository note, the anthologist's sympathetic and discriminating ability for his special task.

I therefore assert that the art reviewer needs first of all an appreciation of art. Just how necessary is a definite schooling in art history need not be determined. The book reviewer must have some knowledge of literature, else he would not have turned to his particular profession. Just so, the art reviewer would have, before selecting his medium of expression, some knowledge of art, some general information on art activities, gleaned either from study or from observation.

There is also necessary a knowledge of the fundamental rules of reporting. Here is where the novice can find an entering wedge as a reviewer. The Art Page of a national daily newspaper purchases reports of museum and gallery exhibitions regularly. Many of these write-ups have not a word of criticism, appraisal, in them. They are often mere news items, telling where the exhibit is, the dates on which it will remain open to the public, and a record of what the walls contain. This sort of material is also printed in many other newspapers; any experienced journalist can produce it. In fact, the catalogue of the museum will give the reporter his facts and information, which, when augmented by a visit to the exhibition rooms, will give him ample material for his article. And once having learned the language of artists and art reviewers, he can "cover" the same exhibit for more than one newspaper or magazine.

But I cannot refrain from stressing the ease with which the specially adapted reviewer can break into this field. "I don't know anything about art," is a remark most often heard in an art gallery. This current comment should show the reviewer his exact task. The timidity of the general public before a wall of paintings argues to me of a deep-seated, a most natural, interest in art. It should be the reviewer's mission to help the public overcome this very timidity. It is not to be expected that the public should know much about art. What does the public know about poetry, for that matter? What do writers know about literature? Can our literary critics satisfy us by answering the following random questions: Why did Amy Lowell write her sonnets? What gave Walt Whitman's verse its universal appeal? Why do we like Joyce Kilmer's pre-war poems? It will be seen at once that no one person can settle the moot questions of literary criticism, and in the field of art there is even more to clear up. The art critic's voice is

almost that of the pioneer; he need not stop to evaluate the judgments of his predecessors as the good literary critic must do.

I would apply the same yardstick to art-reviewing that a well-known literary critic applied to literature when he told me: "I only aim to find out what the writer is trying to say. Then I tell the good things about his work that I read in it."

So it would seem that the art critic needs first of all an honest sympathy for the artist. Birge Harrison, landscape painter, maintains that in the modern scheme of things the artist is the last rank individualist to survive. Our reviewer recognizes this fact, and he also finds a following inasmuch as he adopts a similar role.

Some of my readers are seeking bread-and-butter information. One can only affirm that the reviewer's technical flourishes, such as broad estimates, comparisons, the tracing of historical influences—in other words, the coveted equipment of the reviewer's knowledge of art history—such a background will be added unto the art reviewer as he advances in this special field of writing. The art reviewer can build up his knowledge of art, of doings in the art world, little by little, by visiting exhibitions, reading art magazines, by practicing his craft. There is no other way. All knowledge is accumulated in this fashion.

Those writers who are entering this field will take encouragement to observe that there are a very few nationally-known art critics. The future will certainly offer opportunity to those who are now serving the necessary apprenticeship in the field of art reviewing! Payment for this material is as liberal as for any writing of a similar nature.

I have remembered what the late George Bellows once said of a writer to whom he took a strong dislike. Another person in the room was suggesting that the writer be secured to launch a brochure because of his free flow of words, his style. "I'm against him," said Mr. Bellows, "a man must have more than words to say something."

This aptly illustrates the difference between the poor and the excellent art reviewer, and harks us back again and again to the reviewer's larger rewards. Have we any more creative work than honest, original criticism? A piece of work well done! "Art for art's sake," might almost sustain the art reviewer who enjoys his work. I fail to see, for a specific instance, how any writer could view the inimitable moonlight interpretations by Robert Reid of the famous "Garden of the Gods", near Colorado Springs, without wanting to write down his or her spontaneous applause and appreciation of the work.

So it seems an established fact that the professional art reviewer must have an insatiable interest in his subject before he can command the (of course!) necessary money reward for his work that will keep

him at it. If one likes to view pictures, art products, one will like to re-view them for others.

As for the more practical information you might be seeking relative to markets, payment rates—this you can procure from such helpful agencies as the writer's magazines. Editors today will be found exceptionally anxious to encourage art reviewing; as a class, they are even more alert to the growing public interest in art doings than are writers.

The American public is waking up to an American Art! It is time that writers awoke to the situation that offers them liberal opportunities in this particular field of reviewing.

Rice Language

Jesse Lowe Knoll

Sectional Information That May Save Some Writer from a Slip

IN handling rice feature stories and in reporting rice news to our state papers in Arkansas, I have found that rice has a little language all its own.

Rough rice is spoken of in terms of "bags" in the states of Louisiana and Texas. A bag contains approximately 4 bushels. In the states of Arkansas, California, Missouri and Illinois, farmers sell their rough rice by the bushel of 45 pounds.

In the milling process rough rice is measured in barrels, 162 pounds to the barrel, or 3.6 bushels. Clean rice is packed in 100-pound pockets for shipping.

The by-products of rice are called "clean rice", "bran", "polish", "screenings", "brewers' rice", and "the hulls." The average barrel of rough rice produces approximately 90 pounds of head rice or whole-grained clean rice, 12 pounds of screenings, or broken rice, about 6 pounds of brewers' or very small particles of broken rice, 10 pounds of bran, and 4 pounds of polish. The hulls are cast into the mill furnace and sold in ashes for fertilizer.

Bran and polish are packed in 100 pound bags and sold by the ton. Screenings and brewers' rice are packed in 100 pound pockets and sold by the pound, as is clean rice. Poorer grades of rice, and rices streaked with red, are coated with glucose and talc in the milling process to whiten the grains.

Rice was first raised in this country in the Carolina's, where the fields were flooded by the rivers. Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas are now the predominating rice-growing states, named in the order of their yield. Rice culture is yet in the experimental stage in Missouri and Illinois, although reports of favorable yields from these states grow every year.

There is a wealth of research and experimental work to be done on rice. Feature stories sell well, and a weekly or monthly report on the rice market always gains a first-page space for me in our paper.

Some Side-Line Profits in the Commercial Field

Jack Wooten

In Which It Appears that if One Bow-String Snaps It is Well to Have Another

SEVERAL years ago I sat down to write an article for the WRITER'S MONTHLY, but after spending several hours of effort I was forced to abandon my idea and tear the typewritten sheets into bits. My failure to complete that article was due to lack of experience. I had never made any kind of success in the writing game, and therefore I was unable to tell others what to do and how to do it.

Of course I had passed through —was passing through at the time I attempted the article—the experience of rejected manuscripts. With the writing "bug" in my system I had aimed rather high and had directed all my attention to the fiction field and the national magazines. And I had met with disappointments: my work came back, and with each rejection my heart became a little heavier.

The theme of the article I abandoned was based on my sad experience of rejections, namely, "If you think you can write, keep on punching the typewriter, although all of your work has been turned down; you will 'land' one of these days." At first, I thought I could get this idea across in a style that would be acceptable to the editor, but as I put my thoughts on paper I soon found that I was not getting anywhere with my argument, and that the sketch was merely the record of a series of disappointments, with an intermingling of optimistic reflections and pessimistic phrases. I realized that readers of writing magazines wanted helpful suggestions from successful writers, and not words of encouragement from a failure. And so the article went into the trash basket, and I went to bed!

This afternoon, as I pound on the keys, I can tell a quite different story.

I read an article by Frank Williams in the August, 1926, issue of The WRITER'S MONTHLY, on "Commercial Writing", but my experience is different from his in that I have used my writing entirely as a side-line, while he is making a profession of his. He spoke of earning $500 per month, but I can not talk in such high figures at the present time. I can, however, speak of earning fifty dollars, seventy-five and even one hundred in a single month.

First, let me give just a little background before turning to the merits of the commercial side-line field.

When I found that I was not getting anywhere in the fiction world, and that despite many hours of work and perspiration I was failing to find an editor who by sending along an occasional check, would admit that I could write, I sat down and took stock of myself. I soon reached one conclusion: I had not had enough experience. I did not know the ropes.

I had finished a four-year course in college and had spent one year in post-graduate work, but with all that I had not had any real practical experience in authorship. I considered for a time, and finally decided to seek a position on my home-town morning newspaper. I applied for the post, and to my joy found a vacancy.

It was the same old story: A "green" reporter had to start at the bottom of the ladder on a small salary. Still I made up my mind to take the chance, and with that decision came a golden opportunity to test my writing ability.

It was pretty hard work at first —rather discouraging sometimes. The city editor had little mercy when it came to wielding the blue pencil. He slashed my copy from the top of the page to the bottom, and sometimes left a line that I could recognize in print the next morning.

But we all have to pass through a stage of probation. As for me, I would not take many thousands of dollars for my experience on that newspaper. It has given me an opportunity to observe life, to associate with all sorts of people, and above everything to write reams and reams of copy. It isn't like sitting quietly down in a comfortable arm chair and twisting your imagination through the crevices of your brain, but it is pounding the typewriter one day after another, setting down facts that you have gleaned through personal contact ,and getting them upon the paper before the dead-line forces your efforts into the trash basket. In newspaper work you write under pressure. There is a certain time when that copy must be on the city editor's desk, and it is up to you to get it there. There is no time for day-dreaming or thesaurases that will give you the choicest of words. It is a training that makes the writer think quickly and maintain the poise of a constant grinder of sentences. Newspaper writing is a test, and if a writer can meet it successfully he is bound to be a success in one form of scribbling or another.

It was while I was in newspaper work that I hit on to the idea of trade-journal correspondence. In the various offices and business places where my reportorial work carried me I chanced to see the periodicals that carried the news of those businesses or professions. Naturally I was not making any too much money on the morning daily, so I decided to try a little side-line writing for the trade journals. Many of them carried news items of the trade, and in my town there were to be found a number of short stories that were acceptable to these periodicals. Then

there were conventions held in our city, and some newspaper reporter was called upon to cover them. It fell to my lot to gather much of this kind of news, and it was my good fortune to find a market for many of the resulting reports in the trade journals. In fact, I "broke in" with a number of these publications through this very channel.

When I received a check for a convention report I would write the editor of the magazine to send me a copy. Usually my requests were granted, and this gave me the opportunity to study the policy of the periodical. I tried to keep my eyes open, after I had studied that magazine, and when the opportunity came for me to get a feature story, I would get the facts from the local merchant, write up the article and send it to the trade journal with a letter explaining that I had covered a convention for them and that I was sending along a story which I thought might be of interest. In a great number of cases the article was accepted, on condition that I could furnish a photograph to illustrate it. I then went back to the merchant, told him that the story had been accepted and that it would mean some national publicity for him. Then I asked for the picture, and in most cases he gladly furnished the picture at his own expense.

This work proved extremely interesting, and so towards the latter part of last summer I hit on the idea of setting aside one year in which I would see just what compensation I was receiving from side-line wrting. I selected a bank in my city and made the initial deposit—$2.05! When I went home that evening I made a list of the trade journals to which I had sold material, with the names of the editors and the addresses of the periodicals. I then took out my "Where and How to Sell Manuscripts" and jotted down the names and addresses of trade journals in fields other than those for which I had corresponded.

With those preliminaries over, I set to work in earnest. I not only watched on my newspaper rounds for news and features of the trade, but I looked over the proofs for the next morning's issue and clipped news items and ideas that the other reporters, including the state correspondents, had gotten together for the newspaper.

I watched my special bank account as it began to grow. Every check I received for side-line correspondence, no matter how small nor how large it was, went into that bank account. I kept adding to my list of publications until I was covering practically every business and professional field in the city, and with the articles that grew out of my industry I added to my banking total.

As the months went by I noticed that the total was not only swelling beyond my expectations but that the monthly amount was increasing with the expiration of each thirty days. That gave me another incentive for greater efforts,

and I tried to send enough material to the journals so that the compensation would surpass that of each preceding month. In only two months during the year did I fall below the mark that I had set.

When the twelve months had passed, I took my pass book to the bank, and found that the interest for the year amounted to $16, and that my total side-line writing had netted me over $700.

Of course I had made quite a fair sum of money on my trade-journal correspondence before I began the experiment that added the $700 to my income tax sheet; so that over a period of two-and-one-half years I estimate that I have earned about $1,300 by side-line writing.

The encouraging part to me, however, is the fact that I increased my correspondence income last year, that I established contact with a great many more editors, and that I improved myself to the point where I know more than ever before the ins and outs of trade-journal writing.

I have always tried to play fair with trade-journal editors. I never keep more than one publication on my list for news items of a similar sort, with the exception of a few that pay such very small rates that they do not expect to have an exclusive correspondent. I always send my feature articles to one magazine at a time, and if I ever re-write a feature that has been published in one periodical but will fit into another in a different field, I make it a point to write the editor a letter to the effect that the substance of the idea has appeared before in print. I find that this frankness is appreciated.

From my experience I have found that the majority of the trade journals pay about one-half cent per word, although some give three-fourths of a cent, and occassionally one pays one cent a word. The pay is often slow, most of the publications paying after the story has already appeared in print, but the pay is always timely if the writer keeps sending material every week. The July checks will cover the May correspondence, for instance, but if the writer kept moving during the month of June he will receive another series of checks in August. So what's the difference?

It often pays to query an editor before submitting copy. There are a number of trade-journal correspondents, of course, and they, too, have studied the field. The magazines do not like the same kind of stuff every three months.

I spoke of the fiction endeavors that brought me rejection slips. I am still pegging away at the short-story game, but I am not allowing it to "get my goat", nor to discourage my other work. I hold to the opinion that a writer stands a much better chance of making a success with fiction by working on it during those moments when a worth-while idea comes to him than he can by devoting his every effort to this field while he is passing through the period of struggle inevitable with an unknown fiction writer.

Commercial writing has a tendency to encourage the ambitious fiction author. Once firmly established in this line, the monthly checks from various periodicals fires the fuel in the brain, gives an incentive to write and adds to the confidence of eventually attaining success. That is a great part of the battle—a strong belief in your own ability, and the satisfaction of knowing that some of your brain-children are finding a place in the columns of some publication.

Many a writer is discouraged because he never gets anything accepted. As a result, he loses his confidence, and he stunts his best efforts with worry over his many disappointments.

The trade-journal field is diversified and waiting for willing workers. My story of experiences in this line of writing may not be much of an inspiration to the professional commercial writer, but I hope it will be of help to the newspaper men whose chances for "picking up some stray coin" is unlimited, and to the struggling writer who has a keen desire to see his work in print.

I trust, Mr. Editor, that you will feel as if I had something to say this time. I am glad for your sake that I did not send you the half-baked article I prepared several years ago!

True Happiness

There is no greater mistake in life than to think that leisure means happiness.

The only true happiness in life must be gotten out of work. The only place a man can experience joy and pride of accomplishment is in doing something creative. It may be painting a picture or excavating a sewer. It may be writing a poem or selling a piece of real estate. It may be curing a sick man or embalming a dead one. But every man must have his work in life and out of the joy of this work he must find happiness.

We envy the millionaire in his big limousine, his private car, his yacht, and cry to ourselves as we see him pass "Lucky stiff!" when in reality we are twice as happy as he is.

Where we make our mistake is in making a task out of our jobs. We work too hard at them. We feel that the works would not go on without our personal attention to every detail. Some philosopher has said, "The man who cannot leave his work has a job too big for him," and there is a lot of truth in it.—*K iwanis Chronicle.*

The Present Fiction Outlook

Margery Swett Mansfield

The Romantic Story is Again Coming into Vogue, Says this Writer

THE literary agent who is in really close touch with the magazine situation, and whose judgment is as trustworthy as every such broker's judgment ought to be, is in a position to give valuable advice regarding the changing currents of usage in the more important magazines. One of these agents recently summed up for me the fictional situation of today.

"Several years ago we had a realistic period in which the most casual episodes, especially if sexual, were, when well handled, accepted as adequate plot. While some of the most successful of the writers of that period still hold their own, the tide has turned back to romantic stories—i.e, stories of well-built plots, plenty of action. Style is seldom mentioned in the "requirements" given by editors—though it is safe to say that they are unconsciously influenced by it in selecting stories.

"The action story is often the type in which one thing after another is kept happening in rapid succession. The writer who does not produce this type may, however, 'break into' the big magazines if he or she can write a gripping story, or a 'poignant one'—using the word in its usual, abused, sense. The thrill, or the sob in the throat, are sought. 'Sex' becomes 'love', and is handled from the emotional rather than from the instinctive or biological aspect. It is true that there are light, sophisticated stories printed, but usually by established writers; they are the hardest thing to 'break in' with—at least into the larger magazines. The smaller ones, paying a cent and a cent-and-a-half a word, will use light stories from new writers. However, as the rates for non-fiction in metropolitan newspapers is frequently a cent a word, and there are plenty of magazines paying two cents or more a word for non-fiction, and as non-fiction requires less creative energy and rewriting than fiction, it hardly pays the writer—financially—to write fiction for the smaller magazines, unless he is so situated that he cannot get non-fiction material, or find a market for it."

The agent adds, however, that she thinks it possible to work with fiction from the smaller magazines into the larger ones, especially if one writes for the smaller magazines the type of thing the larger ones use. For the extremely suc-

cessful fiction writer there is no "rate" of payment. It is a matter of competitive bidding, and the resulting prices often run into four figures. Many writers are drawn into the fiction field in the hope of getting these top-prices. Many will be disappointed, for, apart from ability and hard work, there is an element of chance or accident in the winning of "special rates"—the accident of very much pleasing two editors of large commercial magazines, and pleasing them at the same time. Fortunately, self-support is possible at the usual announced rates; and, with sufficient industry even at the lower rates. In this connection an ex-editor told me that the poorest writer he knows makes around $8,000 a year. He does it by indefatiguable energy and perseverance, chiefly by clipping interesting paragraphs from congressional records, research bulletins, and the like, and pasting them together into timely articles. It is evident that the man's "news sense" and his business ability excel his literary ability, and are earning their just dividends.

Type or Note

J. E. Bullard

A New Phase of An Old Subject That Will Interest Many Practical Craftsmen of the Pen

THOUGH the note-book habit is an excellent one to cultivate, it is not well to carry it too far. Intemperance in anything, in fact, is a bad thing. So much is a truism, but we may not realize that an intemperate note-taker can become so addicted to the habit that he has no time to write, and unless he does write, the notes will do him little if any good. He may have a library of note books, and find that when he looks through those most ancient, some if not all of the notes fail to bring to his mind the ideas they originally suggested.

Writing must be made the main habit, if the notes are to be of the greatest value. Working up the notes into an article or a story just as soon as possible after taking them fixes them in the mind so thoroughly that the ideas are unconsciously used over and over again, though in different ways. Those ideas thus become nuggets of gold with a real market value and help to swell the bank account.

Another important feature about constant writing, of making it a practice to write something every day, is that the habit makes it easier to pick up ideas and to jot down notes of things and thoughts that otherwise would be overlooked.

Some of the very best ideas I get for business articles are those suggested while listening to talks on engineering topics at the local

engineering society. Having had ambitions to be an engineer, and having had some actual engineering experience as well as doing some writing at the present time on engineering subjects, both qualify me for membership in this society, and association with engineers and attending the meetings mean a return of a goodly amount every year from the ideas thus picked up.

Nevertheless, were it not for the fact that I am writing every day, and probably, that when I first began writing I was engaged in work closely allied to engineering, the chances are that far fewer ideas would be found at this source. Their value lies largely in the fact that, coming from a rather unexpected source, they give a freshness and difference to the articles that cause editors to like them.

As an illustration of the kind of ideas suggested one example may be cited. While attending a series of lectures on concrete, I was impressed by a statement made by the lecturer on the dangers of using averages. "An average does not exist," he said, "and if you use averages your mixture will never be just right. You must know the facts in each case and work out the correct formula for mixing the water, cement and aggregate."

Writing down the words "Danger of Averages" on a slip of paper, I listened to the rest of the lecture, and the next day wrote an article for a business paper with the foregoing note as a title. It brought from the editor to whom it was submitted an enthusiastic letter of acceptance. The article dealt with business problems in an entirely different way from that in which the usual run of articles treats of them.

Had I not been writing business articles every day, however, the idea would never have come to me —those three words would not have stood out as they did. It was because of constant writing that the note was made, and later became the title and the basis of an article that met with a ready sale.

Another experience that showed the value of having some main object in view all the time, and constantly working toward the achievement of that object, was the interviewing of a man at the head of a good-sized business establishment. There are few men that are so full of good business ideas as this man. He is in his office every working hour of the day and he is thinking about business the rest of the twenty-four hours, for he even seems to dream business!

Some months before the last total eclipse of the sun in the East he was reading a magazine article telling what to expect during that event and giving much general information in regard to eclipses. He was impressed with the phenomenon, but because he cannot think of anything without bringing his business into it in some way he began to ponder on just how the eclipse was connected with his business. In the end he worked out an advertising idea around the eclipse which brought his concern

more publicity than it ever had received before. His note book was of value because he was ready to put the ideas in it to immediate practical application. If he had been less completely interested in his business he never would have connected that eclipse with his own affairs and would have lost a truly wonderful publicity opportunity.

When one is constantly "on the job" he does not have to preserve notes very long before using them. As a matter of fact, usually the idea is in full bloom when he takes the notes, and unless he uses them right away the idea will begin to wilt and fade like a flower that has been picked and not placed in water.

A newspaper reporter had just returned to the "city room" after covering an assignment to Rum Row. He had experienced some very exciting adventures, including a surprise visit by Federal enforcement officers as the rum-running party landed. For more than twenty-four hours he had had no sleep, yet the moment he reached his desk he tucked paper into his typewriter and began to reel off copy. He remained at the machine till the editor ordered him to stop and go home. Even then he remonstrated. That copy was full of live interest because he wrote it while at white heat. Had he let his notes mellow the story would have lost much of its spontaneity and proved less interesting reading.

Notes seem to resemble butter and eggs to a greater degree than they do wine. Letting them mellow and age does not always improve them. The process is far more likely to cause them to lose much of their usefulness. There may be some who find that old notes are of more value than new, but usually the value of the old ones in such cases is due to the leavening of the yeast of new jottings and of new ideas.

It is a fine thing to take notes, to fill note books, to jot down all the good ideas that come to mind. It is a bad thing to keep them too long before using them. A cuff, an old envelope, a scrap of paper on which a word or two is written, will result in a much better story or article if the idea so impaled is worked over at once than is usually the case where a vast volume of old stuff gathered up during the course of years is worked over. The life has gone out of the old stuff. It is dead. The note books have become a morgue.

They call the place where all the old stuff in a newspaper office is kept by that name. The newspaper morgue is full of dead matter that may never be used again, yet which at any time *may* be needed. It is carefully filed, so that when needed the exact information sought can be found. Photographs, data and information of interest are filed away there. This material is used only when the news of the day requires that it be used to expand certain news stories. In other words, it is merely used to add greater interest to new material.

One point about this old material

that every writer may well take seriously is the method of filing it away. A book or books full of unindexed notes will become valueless after a time, because it is so difficult to find just the information one desires. I have found it much more effective in making notes that I may want to refer to sometime in the future to make them on slips of paper three-by-five inches in size and file them away by a system which will make it easy to find the data desired in a short space of time. If one uses the ideas just as soon after they are jotted down as possible, there is not so much of the note material that is worth saving in other form than a carbon copy of the article.

Many of the notes I have made have been jotted on the cover of a magazine I have been reading at the time, on the margin of a newspaper, or on anything else I may have in my hand at the time. These I leave on my desk until I can use them, which is usually within 24 hours after I have made the notes, often in less time, and rarely more than two or three days after the notes were taken. In this way I make the notes worth hundreds of dollars to me every year.

If I did not make the notes I would lose the idea. If I did not write the manuscript just as soon as possible after taking the notes, fewer of the submitted manuscripts would be accepted. After writing one manuscript from the notes—and the notes may consist of but two or three words, sometimes in fact of only one—or even while writing the manuscript, a new way of using the idea suggests itself, and that idea expands until it possesses no more resemblance to the original than a man of 60 looks like the lad he was fifty years ago. The idea grows and matures, and as it becomes bigger and stronger it can be made to work harder and produce better results.

It is fine to cultivate the notebook habit, but it is bad to cultivate it at the expense of the typewriter habit, because a frail infant idea carefully nursed on the typewriter may grow in a surprisingly short period of time into a strong, robust adult-idea that will earn more fame and money for the author than will a million much more promising ones that are allowed to suffer from malnutrition between the pages of a note book. All notes taken become puny things unless they are given a daily diet of typewriter-ribbon ink, and the only way they can be given that diet is by constant pounding on the keys.

"A man is like a tack; he can only go as far as his head will let him."

—JOHN R. HIXSON.

How I Staged a "Come-Back" at Sixty

By An Anonymous Antediluvian

Read this Frank Statement that is Far More Interesting—Especially to Oldsters—than the Most Flaring "Confession" Story

LUCKILY, I had not reached the last Shakespearian stage of

"Second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything",

though I had arrived at the "sixth stage", and should have been preparing to shift

"Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch at side."

But I did nothing of the sort. Circumstances over which I had control but did not have sense enough *to* control, compelled me to "pass up" the "slippered pantaloons" for the time being. Instead of letting well-enough alone and being content to "Do my duty in that state of life into which it had pleased God to call me", as the Catechism says, I catapulted myself into a state of life into which it was evident that it had not pleased God to call me. In a word, I made a mess of it. It was then that I staged my "come back."

Ambition, properly directed and tempered with common sense, is a desirable quality, but I was too ambitious. I wanted to get-rich-quicker than by the slow-but-sure process I had been pursuing. I thought I was smarter than I proved to be. I thought I could successfully match my wits with anyone, and discovered that they did not match well. I should have known, as the poet, who

. . . . "says that we
Are ever wayward, weak and blind;
He tells us in his homily
Ambition ruins all mankind."

That's putting it pretty strong, but ambition did ruin me, and at the "lean and slippered pantaloon" age, too. It put me down and held me down. But I struck back—fought—and "found myself" in a manner I am going to explain; and the manner was by butting into the business of writing for a living.

I was practicing my profession and was a fairly good-sized frog in a comparatively small puddle. But I yearned to be a bigger frog in a bigger puddle. I tried the big puddle, and found that I was the smallest kind of little frog. When I finally woke up to this fact—but not before the frogs in the big puddle, big and small, had squeezed me dry in a commercial business for which I was entirely unfitted—I discov-

ered that I was "dead broke". That was something more than eight years ago, and I am now eight years older than sixty.

I had sold my practice and had agreed not to re-enter the field. I floundered about trying to get a foot-hold "somewhere" at "something". I had no special qualifications for anything except for my profession, and that was barred. I had never held down a "job", as "jobs" go, in my life—never punched a time-clock, so to speak. I would have been glad to punch anybody's time-clock who would have set me at work at some gainful employment. "What kind of position do you want?" the gentlemanly clerk would inquire. Receiving no very satisfying reply, because I had no satisfying answer to give, he usually handed me a printed application blank.

First question: "Your age?" "Sixty".

That settled it—no need to go farther. Nobody wanted to take on an "old guy" who hadn't any special qualifications for doing anything, and whose best recommendation consisted of several years of failure to make good.

But I "had my nerve with me". Although I was "broke", I didn't look nor act so. My "front" was unimpaired, and I kept smiling.

Then by the merest accident I entered the business of writing. Although I had never written a line for publication, I did have a certain qualification—a certain advantage. I had had a college education and possessed the ability to express myself clearly, gained through frequent writing of technical reports and professional papers. In addition, I had been an omnivorous reader and had a good memory. These things, of course, helped, though only in a small way. The best thoughts in the world put down in the academic language of the technical report will have a dreary time nowadays hunting a profitable market. The public doesn't want that sort of thing—will not read it, and editors will not buy it. In my ignorance I didn't know this—but I found it out.

Why I deliberately chose the business of writing I cannot satisfactorily explain. In reality, my qualifications were practically negligible. Millions of men and women might show as good or better. I couldn't even operate a typewriter; was entirely unfamiliar with magazine and newspaper "make-up"; didn't know "pi" from an "em"; couldn't distinguish between a "printer's devil" and any other kind of "devil". Some qualifications! Writers on the art of writing say that nine tenths of us are obsessed with the urge to get into print; think they have a message to convey to the public; are convinced that, with a little encouragement and time, they can produce something that will make the world better and more livable. No such "urge" obsessed me. I had no sublime thoughts struggling for expression. I just blundered into the writing game. Had I known at the start that there is always an army of free-lance writers, thousands and thousands

strong—a shifting army whose personnel is continually changing as the weak sisters are rattled out—had I known that the supply of purchasable literary material is always greater than the demand, I never would have butted into so forbidding a field.

The accident that started me on a career of writing for a living came in thiswise. A friend—the president of a national trade-organization—was to address the annual meeting of his association but was suddenly called out of town on business, leaving him no time to prepare his speech. In sheer desperation he turned to me, merely because I happened to be nearer to him than anyone else at the particular moment he realized his predicament. I say "in desperation", and it is literally true. He knew I was inexperienced, but was obliged to take a chance. Again I "had my nerve with me" and said I'd try—he having told me the main points he wanted to cover.

The War was then on—patriotism, preparedness and thrift were the order of the day. "Win the war!" was everybody's cry. So I wrote a patriotic speech on our clear duty. I found it wasn't half hard to write that address and, as I afterwards listened to the president read it from the rostrum as his own production, I was tempted to get right up and denounce him for a fraud sailing under false colors. I had surprised him as well as myself. It was good stuff. He generously thanked me for it—that was all, except a gratis ticket to the banquet which followed the meeting. But not all, for through his recommendation I afterwards wrote other addresses for other presidents and vice-presidents, and these were not thank-you jobs by any means.

That settled it. I perked up. I could write. There are a few subjects with which I am quite familiar—rather high-brow subjects: economics, finance, sociology, psychology, engineering, and the like. "Dry as dust" do you say? Quite right. I tried to spring these "Dry as dust" things—essays—put up in the most approved academic style—on the magazine editors. They gave me the merry laugh; told me I was an anachronism and had better study the language of the people. I studied that language—a foreign language to me—learned it, and when learned, I found it not difficult to take seemingly Dry-as-dust subjects and make them interesting enough for people to read and editors to buy.

It is no joke to break into the writing game without special qualifications — without special training in some journalistic school or long apprenticeship with some magazine or newspaper. Without egotism I believe I may truthfully say that I am one of the few who have made a success in that field without the aid of this special training. I have long since been graduated from the amateur class, but please don't run away with the notion that I have acquired riches—independence. It takes longer than eight years to

reach that stage, even if one is a genius, and I lay no claim to that. What I have done has been accomplished by the hardest kind of hard, intensive work. But it is a fascinating occupation, and of course I like it, otherwise I could not have succeeded. But the business of writing is little different from any other business: Success comes only with the closest kind of application.

My purpose in writing this anonymous autobiography is not to influence anyone for or against entering the writing game. That feature of this story is merely an incident, an accident. I have another purpose. I believe I have shown that it is never to late to learn. There are thousands and thousands of men and women "holding down jobs" for which they are obviously unfitted. They know it, so do their employers, and they never get anywhere. There probably is not one of them who is entirely unqualified by some natural ability to do something else much better, yet they haven't the "nerve", the energy, the initiative, to break away and go in search of that thing. Circumstances forced me at the age of sixty to make a shift. I shifted, and succeeded. But there is no need for others to wait, as I did, for the "lean and slippered pantaloon" age before shifting. If you find you are a square peg trying to fit yourself into a round hole, break away while you are yet young. Go in search of a square hole. You'll find it if you try. And when you find it you will make your success.

CO-OPERATION

You have an idea,
I have an idea;
We swap.
Now you have two ideas;
I have two ideas;
Both are richer.
What you gave you have.
What you got I did not lose—
This is co-operation.

—*Anon.*

The Farm Press Demands Action

Oscar A. Hanke

The Associate Editor of Poultry Tribune
Tells Us Some Pertinent Facts

FARM folks are no different from ordinary folks; they want the action, chase, struggle and contest elements in their stories just like other folks. That is my candid opinion, formed after three years of careful observation, both as a free-lance contributor and as a director of editorial work.

"How shall I write for the folks who read farm magazines?" is a question which often occupies the mind of writers who contemplate entering the farm field. My first bit of advice is this: Don't attempt to write in the farm field unless you understand farm folks. If you have not had the good fortune to be reared on a farm, get out and mingle with the people. Talk with them, put your feet under their table at mealtime, go about with them, and you will be better qualified to write about their interests and for their perusal.

Farm folks are up-to-date; they have automobiles and radios, and many of them enjoy electric lights. They are cognizant of the giddy whirl of business, and they are keyed up for action—their reading must be pitched in a corresponding key.

Since I have had three years' experience as a free-lance contributor to the general farm press, and am now editorially examining free-lance contributions, perhaps these few suggestions will prove of value to agricultural free-lance writers.

Action in the beginning—that is what counts in an offering to the editor of the farm press. The contributors of most agricultural free-lance writers do not have this quality. The opening of their story is too ordinary; there is no immediate and particular appeal; in presenting a new subject the unknown is not tied up with the known.

To illustrate my point, let me quote two ways of beginning a story. The subject is "Fight Lice and Mites". Story Number 1 begins: "When hens are infested with lice and mites they have a heavy drain on their system and they do not lay as many eggs as when they are free of these pests".

Story Number 2 begins: "Although they may be deeply entrenched, and feel safe from the ordinary implements of warfare, the enemies of poultry can be routed.

"Just as the drains of war are heavy on any nation engaged in

conflict, so are the drains of lice and mites exceedingly heavy on poultry. Neither laying hens nor young stock can accomplish much when visited by these tormentors of fowldom.

"In order to combat the entrenched enemies most successfully, we as war chiefs must lay the plans of attack, and our attack will be successful in proportion to our knowledge of the habits of the invaders. If we are familiar with the enemies' life-habits, we can easily rout them."

Which "lead" has the more human interest, more of the chase element, more of the struggle idea, greater action? Number two immediately compares the problem under consideration with warfare, and suggests that the tools of war be used. The idea of the size of the job is immediately conveyed to the reader, and interest—self-interest—is challenged.

Farm folks like lots of pictures, too. They get a great many magazines—six or seven to the ordinary farm home is about the average. Certainly stories in the farm papers must "start off with a bang" and be well illustrated in order to compete for attention with the other reading matter which the farmer receives.

Pictures are the farm-paper editor's greatest problem. Inexperienced free-lance contributors just don't send them. They will use up much time procuring a story and writing it well and then neglect to enclose pictures. Many a good article is rejected just because pictures did not accompany it. Remember that 87 per cent of all sales-impressions are made through the eye—pictures sell your story.

The demand is gradually changing toward shorter articles. Again because of competition among farm papers, those offerings which are finished in a single manuscript have the best chance of being read. Short articles then, of from 1000 to 1200 words, with suitable illustrations, are what the farm magazine field wants.

Please follow the same care in preparing your manuscript for a farm-paper editor that you do for the general magazines. If you are not acquainted with the style that manuscripts should follow, a copy of "Where and How to Sell Manuscripts" will certainly prove to be a worth-while investment.

Remember always to drop the beginning of your story a least one-third down the page; the editor needs space to write a title, perhaps a sub-title, and notations for the printer.

Yes, the farm magazines offer a good market—not for mediocre stories, but for the very best. Many agricultural magazines are paying from a cent to a cent-and-a-half a word, and some pay two and three cents. Well-written stories of 1000 to 1200 words, suitably illustrated, with plenty of action, easily find a receptive market.

Writing Letters to Editors

Neil Wayne Northey

The First Paper in this Two-Part Series States the Problem As the Editor Sees It

THE SUBJECT of writing to editors, and what it means to the writer, has been suggested to me by personal experience as both editor and free-lance, and this double viewpoint gives me an insight into each side of the question.

From the editorial side of the desk I can say that a letter that is brief but not too pointed, personal yet not familiar, respectful but not begging, cheerful without being nonsensical, businesslike without affectation, and "neat but not showy", will be—if not actually welcomed by the editor—at least quite unobjectionable to him. But the writer who is so indiscreet as to throw tact to the winds, and who does not hesitate to argue a "pet peeve" with an editor, not only avails himself nothing, but often actually locks the editorial door against his future entrance. More often than not, the writer is at least technically in the wrong when a misunderstanding arises, either because he is uninformed, forgetful, careless, or perhaps unreasonable.

As an example of the foregoing statement, I should like to cite several personal experiences that illustrate different situations that are likely to arise between writer and editor. The following correspondence pertains to a synopsis which I received while I was editing a certain magazine, and gives the facts better than I could write them:

May 12, 1925

Dear Mr. Editor:

I have just returned from a two-years' stay in the Scandinavian countries, and I have brought with me a lot of sketches of experiences, notes and other material, that I do not want to take the time to finish unless I find a market for them. I will put the inclosure in proper shape in case you can use that sort of story. I also have brought with me a lot of photographs, of which some are suitable for illustrations. If you can not use the inclosure, kindly return it as soon as possible.

The synopsis indicated to me that there was a chance for an acceptance, so I wrote:

May 19, 1925.

Dear Mr. Writer:

I have read your partly completed manuscript "Seal Ice", with considerable interest, and I believe that it would have a good chance for an acceptance, if well illustrated. However, I never can be sure, of course, until I see the finished story.

I am afraid our rates will not be very attractive to you. We re-

ceive so much material gratis that we buy very little and pay for that which we do buy at the rate of ½-cent per word, with nothing extra for pictures. If you care to finish the story for publication and submit it again with pictures, I shall be glad to go over it, but until then I should not care to accept it positively.

Faithfully yours,

Editor

In due time the "finished" story arrived. It was rather less of a "story" than the synopsis, which had been almost complete in itself, and there was not a single view to illustrate it. The contribution was returned with a rejection slip. Some time later the following was received:

August 15, 1925

Dear Mr. Editor:

I had a letter from you last May saying that you could use the story entitled "Seal Ice", which I sent you on May 12, so I suppose that you have published it by this time, and I should be very glad to get the check for the price you offered to pay.

Very truly yours,

I replied as follows:

August 19, 1925

Dear Mr. Writer:

I have your note asking about your story "Seal Ice". I find that this story was returned to you at No. Ave., City, on June 5, 1925. I remember the story distinctly. It was first submitted in synopsis form, with the offer to rewrite it and send suitable pictures. I liked the substance of the story, but must say that the rewritten form was not as attractively as the original, and there were no pictures accompanying it. I did not make an offer for the story, but said that if it proved available, our usual rates were ½-cent a word. In consideration of the foregoing, I am wondering if you have not sent it to Recreated Outdoors, American Outdoors, or some other publication with a name similar to ours. I am inclined to believe this is the case, because of the fact that we never offer a price for a story until we see it finished, and then we send a check with the acceptance.

Very truly yours,

Editor.

I thought surely that that would settle the matter, but read this:

August 23, 1925

Dear Mr. Editor:

If you sent back the story "Seal Ice" on June 5, as you say in your letter of August 19, please have it traced, for it has not come to me. I keep my books on outgoing and incoming manuscripts very carefully, and I am positive that it has not come back. Furthermore, you asked me to rewrite that story and you set the price you would pay, so it does not seem reasonable that you should have returned it. I think if you make a search among your manuscripts you will find it. It may also be that you changed the title in publication and therefore have overlooked it. I should be very glad to receive the June and July copies of your magazine. Since you asked me to rewrite the story, and stated the price you would pay, I certainly will look for a check for it, and I trust you will send it to me with as little delay as possible, for it is hard to make both ends meet when editors try to get out of paying for one's work.

Very truly yours.

Surely, thought Mr. Writer, that will get action and bring Mr. Crooked Editor to terms. It got action, all right, but the result was no doubt disappointing to Mr. Writer. Here is what I wrote:

September 10, 1925.

Mr. Writer:

I am sorry that you have taken the stand you have regarding the story "Seal Ice", which was apparently lost in the mails. I stated in my former letter that the story had been returned, and gave the date. We keep a record of every manuscript that is returned. We also keep a very complete file of every piece of copy on hand awaiting publication. When a story is used, the file card is changed into the "used" file and marked with the date of publication. Every card shows the date the manuscript was received, the name and address of the writer, the department under which it is filed, the title of the article, and finally the date of publication. We also make out a file card giving the amount paid for each piece of copy.

As I mentioned in a previous letter, our records show that your story was returned June 5. No publisher is responsible for manuscripts lost in the mail. We have no means of tracing manuscripts unless the writer encloses sufficient postage for registering. We are not trying to "get out of" paying for any manuscript accepted. This magazine has been published since 1898, and pays promptly on acceptance. Don't worry about your story having appeared in the June or July number. Even though it had been accepted, the very earliest date it could have been used would have been August, for our schedule is made up weeks in advance of the date of publication. At the time your story was received, the June number was in the hands of the printer, and the illustrations for the July number were in the hands of the engraver.

I should like to direct your attention to the fact that your own records are not accurate. You state that the story was sent to me May 12. This is not true. The synopsis only was sent on that date, with a letter in which you offered to "put the inclosure in proper shape in case you can use that sort of story. I also have brought with me a lot of photographs of which some are suitable for illustrations". The synopsis was returned to you May 19, and as you insist that I made an offer for the story, saying that I stated the price I would pay, I take pleasure in quoting in full the letter which I wrote on that date.

(Here I quoted the letter already given, dated May 19.)

If you can see an acceptance, or an offer, in that letter, you must have a vivid imagination. I regret that the story was lost, but further than that I am through. I have written you at length not because the case deserves so much of my time, but because I want this to end it.

Very truly yours,
Editor.

And it did.

Another case was that of a writer who submitted a manuscript answering, in a very offensive way, an article that had appeared in one of our previous issues and asking payment for his reply. We might have returned the manuscript with a rejection slip, but instead we went to the trouble of explaining to the would-be contributor that it was our policy not to pay for such replies, if they were used, for we considered that we were merely being courteous to the writer by giving him space in which to air his views. However, this writer did not accept our explanation in the kindly mood in which it was given, and courteously ask that his con-

tribution be returned because the terms were unsatisfactory. Read his reply:

August 22, 1925.

Dear Mr. Editor:

Yours received. I purchased the last edition of *Life Outdoors*, and in as much as, judging from articles contained therein, you do not prefer scientific articles, but cater to the pseudo-scientific; and inasmuch as your pseudo-scientific junk is evidently run to degrade and belittle scientific men, contrary to all rules of ethics or even common respect; for these two reasons I do not care to have my name associated with *Life Outdoors* in any way, and request that you immediately return my MS.

Moreover, I cannot understand the mediocre mentality that would ask me to contribute gratuitously to your magazine, neither do I understand the purpose unless you are mendicants in guise, [sic] or wish to hold up me to the ridicule and be ridiculed by your pseudo-scientific pifflers. The first I do not believe is true; the second is probably true. Be that as it may, you will please return MS. posthaste, also be advised that for the protection of other scientific writers every college and university in the league will be advised of your unscrupulous treatment of scientific writers.

If you were an editor would you care to deal further with such a man? I could recite other instances in which the writer was equally as unreasonable, but what is the use? In virtually every case the contributor was as lacking in diplomacy as in the instances cited. It seems as if some writers do not realize the importance of keeping on friendly terms with editors, regardless of personal feelings.

If the writer is so gifted that he can write profitably in several fields—and particularly does this apply to feature writing—he may think that he can afford to lose a few prospective markets by writing acrimoniously, but when the journalist is specializing in only two or three lines, such as juvenile publications, the outdoor magazines, or the agricultural press, his market is somewhat limited at best. No contributor can control the editorial policy and needs of a publication; and this means that he can not "tell the editor what he thinks of him" and yet continue to enjoy editorial favor as manifested by acceptances.

"Oh, I would never be so foolish as the writers you have mentioned," you say. Of course you would not; no sensible person would, but the best way to make sure of your ground is to avoid trouble in the first place by resolving to write only courteously. I know an excellent writer who has gradually closed almost every market in a certain field because he is too impatient and fiery—he will write letters that afterward he regrets.

Next month I shall tell you how to avoid trouble when dealing with editors, by knowing what and when to write, and what precautions to take so as to guard against misunderstandings, which in turn lead to lengthy and sometimes irritating correspondence, usually with no result other than that of bringing about a break between editor and writer.

(To be concluded)

R. S. V. P.

Marie Loscalzo

In Which It Appears that there is Correspondence and Again Merely Correspondence

NO, there was not an invitation to one of those teas so beloved of Isabel M. Paterson, where a flow of soul is supplemented by very special tea served in real Satsuma cups, and the critic-guest is decked in a Manila shawl. Such a function is for the higher gods. The mere plugger stayed at home and sipped cocoa out of the blue cup that isn't cracked—and looked over the noon mail. There were six advertisements from magazine publishers who are giving bargain rates until the tenth of the month. A weekly periodical encloses a subscription blank bearing the words "Your subscription expires with this number." There was a bill from the little dressmaker on West 56th street, and another from the butcher. Finally, there was a correspondence card from a college chum in Minnesota, announcing her feats at bridge, her maid's measles and her four-year-old's broken arm. None of these bear directly on the vocation of writing, except as they interrupt it. But—ah—in a little heap by themselves there are three letters and a postal card.

The first letter, on foreign paper, and post-marked Paris, is from a world-famous writer. It contains news, good-cheer, friendliness and future plans, all in a dozen lines. After it is read, it is carefully cached in the treasure-box. What a beautiful day it is—marked by that letter!

The next epistle is from a tolerably well-known writer, a personal friend of some years. It is curt, and seems to do its best to erase the impression of the first letter. Yes, the epistoleer must have had "one of those attacks" of indigestion when it was written. In case of illness, why write?

The third letter opens with a reference to a newspaper woman who "thinks you can help me." Then a long wail of bad luck, worse editors and worst syndicates fills up five pages of onion-skin paper. As the writer is of the Spencerian school, and her ink must have been frozen in the 1888 blizzard, one must needs guess at part of her tale. She ends by saying that she will be glad to call any morning and bring with her a novelette which she will read aloud. It is all about Prohibition, and is *so* good. With a mental picture of a busy morning wasted listening to that so-good Prohibition propagandum, the next piece of mail is taken up. It does not require much time,

being a postal card—a typewritten card, stating that the writer is taking a short-story course, and would be pleased to have any advice, tips, information, or what-have-you on how you get that way. "Hoping to hear from you soon," he very kindly gives his address, cramped off in one corner of the card.

There it is! The bane of all writers who by any chance get their names in the public prints. Tell all about it, please, to every beginner; but never mind the postage enclosed to say nothing of a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Time doubtless has a variable price and not all writers receive a dollar a word for their efforts, but, on the other hand, the time of the cent-a-word man is worth more to him than ordinary, because he must use more of it to make a dollar. And, anyway, a writer has a commodity to sell, and it is not fair to him to ask him to divulge his working secrets, free, gratis, for nothing—and pay for the transportation, too.

A beginning plasterer does not ask a master-workman for lessons in the craft, and perhaps a sample of his way of mixing, and expect to get it for nothing. Few writers will be insulted by the comparison. Many will wish-to-goodness-Agnes they could make the wages a union plasterer makes these days.

At all events, when writing to an author whom one does not know, personally, one should enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. That is the least of all possible courtesies. Also, postal cards are for casual business only. If a tyro's conception of making a success of writing is so casual, he would better try plastering.

All this refers exclusively to correspondence between would-be writers and those who have, comparatively, arrived — somewhere. Naturally, no one would be inane enough to write to an editor without enclosing that self-addressed stamped envelope! [Oh, wouldn't he?—Editor.]

And—and for this we shall be damned with no faint dispraise—when writing needlessly to editors, stop before you reach the stage of enclosing the stamped envelope. That is, stop before you begin—unless, of course, there is something to be explained in the masterpiece you are sending. And then, naturally, the note is sent with the manuscript, and better lost before mailed. Good stories need no excuses.

Editors may be but little lower than the angels—a few are—but they cannot dry-nurse fifty or sixty young writers by parcel post. They have editorial jobs to keep, and are paid to edit, not teach the writing of short-stories, novels, et cetera, gratuitously. Therefore, have pity on them. Leave them their bitter tasks, and secure your literatesque information from someone who sells it at his desk or school.

Isn't Success worth two cents?

From the Brown Owl's Oak

Blessed are the poor

Fannie Hurst is sued under the allegation that she plagiarized "Humoresque" from an unpublished story. Edna Ferber is sued by a man who alleges that in the novel "Show Boat" she gave her boat the name of a show-boat owned by him and thus damaged him in purse and reputation.

Successful playwrights are in constant danger of actions similar to these. Motion-picture creators who by reason of industry and artistic ability have accumulated money, become the object of court proceedings that whatever the cause of action they set forth do not overlook the possibility of harvesting a pecuniary yield.

From him that hath shall be taken. The writer or dramatic creator whose bank balance remains lean can comfort himself with the reflection that its leanness is probably saving him many a worry.

Of laboratory testing and kitchen cooking

In every piece of writing—to speak of only this one of the forms of expression that may achieve the characteristics of art—anyone so inclined can study either its substance, qualities, effect, and worth as a piece of writing, or the reasons why as a piece of writing it has these qualities and produces this effect. In the one instance, he examines it with the purposes of literary criticism in mind; in the other, with the purpose of discovering principles and means of effective written expression—the elements of technique.

The study of the elements of literary technique relates to literary criticism, but usually as a preliminary—as part of the preparation necessary to the literary critic before he will be qualified for his important work. In order to appreciate the character, workmanship, and worth of a present piece of writing, the critic must come to know what men have aimed at in the past in writing, and the means employed by them in accomplishing their purpose. For all that which is newly thought and written is either an adherence to or a departure from what has been thought and written before, and the new can neither be understood fully nor appraised surely except with comparison with the old.

There are of course critics obviously lacking the sense of form and method (perhaps because they lack temperamentally the will or ability to acquire or develop it). Their criticism is likely to be disproportioned, erratic, ill judged, or misconceived, because it is ignorant of, ignores, or scorns elements that are important in judicious, well grounded and well rounded criticism.

Here we are likely to find the criticism that springs from the impulse of emotional impression, from over-enthusiastic acceptance or rejection of new literary theories and "slogans," from personal approval or disapproval of the "views" the author seems to hold, and from other similar provokers of opinion. Such criticism is more frequent—and more deadly—than that which comes from the "anatomists," those critics who place form, method, technique, above all else.

We discard sucked oranges

It is not surprising that, once the "complete critick" has become familiar with the nature, function, and principles of technique in writing, he should cease to be interested in the study of technique merely in and of itself. "Criticism does not spring from any obscure inner necessity to make solemn laws for literature or for life, but rather from a sociable and urbane liking to provoke 'great argument about it and about'," though to make argument of any worth while kind it must first discern what the laws of literature and life seem to be. And valuable criticism has resulted from the attempt to discover them.

That the critic sometimes inclines to regard books, teachers, and students having to do with the subject of technique, as a bit dull, pedantic, uninspired, and uninspiring, is only normal. The instructor in algebra would be bored with sixth-grade arithmetic and the salesgirl who likes the dressgoods department may heartily dislike "millinery" or "underwear."

There are hours, indeed, when the teachers themselves and the students, editors, all who must continually think about, expound, or insist upon the technique of writing, share the critic's feeling.

The Owl trusts that from time to time the literary critics feel a similar chasteningly corrective sense of the vanity of their peculiar preoccupations and effort. It is not improbable, however, that those who have to do so much with the elements of technical theory and practique, cast an appraising eye now and then on criticism and wonder if it also is the stale, flat, and unprofitable exercise that sometimes it seems.

Plain cooking meets a need

But of the making of criticism there will be no end so long as of the making of writings there is no end; criticism of what is written is as inevitable as it is indispensable. And of the study of the technique of writing there will be no end. The certainty that babes destined to become literary critics

will continue to be born into the world, would assure us of that; and there are those other babes destined to become intelligent readers desirous of an understanding of the art implicit in the literature they read, and those yet other babes destined to undertake writing and therefore to seek from every source all the knowledge obtainable about the art and the craft of writing.

There is no probability that the study of technique as a subject in and of itself (but obviously related to literature as concerns both the criticism and the production of writings) will cease, or dwindle or decline in either value or prestige.

Radio broadcasting and writers' earnings

Broadcasters, resisting the collection of royalties on music and songs used in radio programs, insisted that the broadcasting would popularize such works and result in increased sales; but music-publishers and makers of phonograph records and piano-player rolls render a moving concert of "blues" concerning the ill effect of broadcasting on the sale of their products. They speak especially of jazz, but what is true of jazz will be proportionately true of the other kinds of popular music. The constant repetition, night after night, from many stations, and sometimes two or three times a night from the same station, quickly wears out the popularity of any composition.

In 1924, broadcasting it is said depreciated the general popular music business fifty percent. The effect was somewhat less in 1925. In 1926 there was improvement in gross sales. This increase was owed largely to the publication of a great many more compositions, and involved a heavy increase in expenses, and whether the net profits approached those of earlier years, is not mentioned.

The publication of a larger number of popular compositions should increase the demand for song copy somewhat, but under conditions that seem certain to make earnings less in proportion. Indeed, there is little indication so far that radio has much to promise writers in the way of earnings.

Judging from the publishers' reports summarized above, the decline in royalties through the decrease in sales is far from being balanced by the amount of royalties received for the privilege of broadcasting. That broadcasters can or will use radio plays under conditions that might make the writing of such plays profitable, has yet to appear, and the radio magazines as yet absorb no great amount of copy other than what is staff-written or technical, though possibly some tendency to "broaden out" is discernible among them.

An outlook on life and literature

Elizabeth A. Drew's "The Modern Novel" (Harcourt, Brace & Co., N. Y.C.) is a book that the Owl believes would be of interest to many readers of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY. It gives an account of novelists,

novels, and aspects of contemporary fiction, but much more important, it is intellectually and spiritually illuminating and stabilizing.

Without being ponderous or dull it discusses basic questions—what is the relation between fiction and life, what is literature ("what sundry men and women have said memorably about life"), what is the function of the artist in fiction and what should be the freedom allowed him?

The discussion will clarify the reader's ideas on fundamental questions, and provide him adequate material for formulating his own definitive philosophy of the nature and function of fiction, with permanent standards by which to discriminate values in what he reads. It is a book thoughtful enough to go to the core of its subject, yet popular enough for prompt comprehension by everyone seriously interested in such thought.

When the idealist knows his onions

"Ideas," exclaims the unillusioned camera-man in a recent magazine story—"Ideas! It's the people who see the film that put the ideas in it. Well, let's go."

The cynicism is true in so many instances that it comes disturbingly near to seeming the truth, and it is almost as true of what is written as of what is screened. In vain is the idea spread in the sight of the bird when the bird is averse from ideas or incapable of recognizing ideas not in his own personal assortment.

This remark contains no more cause for offense than does the camera-man's, of which it is in effect only a repetition. One finds the same opinion common wherever there are men of intelligence and some fundamental education who also have had to observe and judge people to any considerable extent. The newspaper-man, the industrialist and the business-man, and the better type of men in politics and government—these and others of equivalent experience are likely to have few illusions concerning either the interest of people generally in ideas as such, or their ability to analyze, comprehend, and appreciate ideas. The camera-man was only putting in words a considered conclusion that to him and other observers has been proved true so often as now to seem a matter of simple fact.

But unless the Owl is misunderstanding the character of Searles, the camera-man, as implied in the story (and thus unawaredly affording yet another instance of the general inability to "get" ideas), Searles had a high respect for ideas (one must have even to note indifference and obtuseness toward them). Into the filming of a story vital with idea, he would have thrown himself with hearty (and not with merely professional and technical) intensity, even though he felt that those whom the idea itself reached would be a scattered few; and although in those circumstances the action and spectacle

would still be screened for the many who think with the eye, the idea would be screened for those who see with the understanding.

For such is the way of either the artist or the idealist who knows his onions.

The objective
Mr. Smith

"This is perfectly clear to me, but it isn't to you," said the professor as he handed back the student's paper. The professor understood the subject and therefore understood what the student was trying to say; the student's understanding of the subject being hazy, what he wrote was hazy.

But it is possible to be obscure through knowing exactly what one means. Not only is it possible; it is likely. Note your own and your neighbor's unconsidered speech: "Jones knocked Smith down today. He called him a liar and they mixed it and Smith got the worst of it." Who called whom a liar? It is so clear in the narrator's mind that he quite fails to realize the listener's inability to guess whether *he* means Jones and *him* Smith, or the other way round.

Conversation is not the only form of discourse that may abound with the various obscurities resulting from such unthought. In what should be careful writing, sentences are numerous that are little more than code signals representing the thought their writer assumes he is expressing—words that, not unlike x and y in algebra, stand as symbols, not as definite and explicit identifications. Without realizing it, the writer passes as sentences what are only a sort of shorthand. The stenographer intentionally uses his accustomed or extemporaneously devised word-signs; the writer unintentionally uses his accustomed or extemporaneous idea-signs.

Can confession-stories be day-dreamed?

"It must be fun. You can just imagine you are the heroine of all those adventures and experiences and then write it out as it were all your own story. It's like day-dreaming and getting paid for it!"

The woman who writes first-person "confession" stories smiled a little wryly.

"My dear, how often have you ever day-dreamed yourself as being weak or foolish, or being 'deceived', or getting yourself into humiliating situations or situations that made people condemn you and that couldn't be explained or justified to them? I wonder if ever, even once, you day-dreamed anything like that about yourself.

"You may have day-dreamed of being a 'dangerous woman'—up to a certain point; or an adventuress —up to a certain point; or a siren —up to a certain point. But when you came to that point, your imagination stopped short. People don't day-dream of themselves as doing reprehensible things or things that bring suffering and reproach and dishonor. It is pleasanter to day-dream of pride and power and triumph, of being looked up to and envied, of happi-

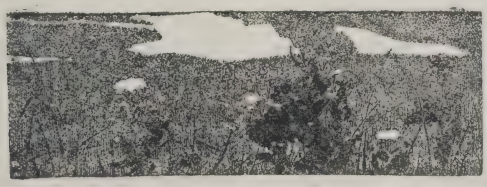
ness and fame, not of going through the fire, even to come out of it stronger and wiser. If they do admit unpleasant situations into their day-dreaming, it is only as passing episodes, to give themselves a chance to 'play pathetic' before coming to the grand climax and triumphant ending.

"No, my dear, you can't day-dream a first-person 'confession' story once in a dozen times. It isn't human 'psychology' to put yourself in such situations But it is human psychology—if you're trained to it—to put some other woman into them And then if you know how you write her story as if she, not you, told it. The nearest you are likely to come to thinking of the story as if you were the woman in it is to ask yourself now and then, 'IF I were in that woman's place, I wonder what *I* should do?' And that's a very different thing."

April a-stir about the Oak

♣ ♣ Pete Peters says, "Some folks is so afraid they wun't be original thet they invent their own grammar. ♣ "They's books as quiet and restful as settin' on a green hillside in the sun in spring." ♣ ♣ Small, Maynard, and Company have gone into bankruptcy, the liabilities being much larger than the assets. The firm's literary standards were apparently better than its ability to cope with conditions in the business of publishing. ♣ Among its worthy but scarcely money-making achievements was the undertaking, and the publication from 1915 to 1925, of the O'Brien series of "Best" stories. The 1926 edition bears the imprint of Dodd, Mead and Company.

♣ ♣ Last month the Owl referred to literary aspirants who hang their clothes on a hickory limb but don't go near the water. "For shame," writes a friend. "But then I suppose that the police *haven't* any authority on the literary beaches." ♣ We don't as yet have to show a permit to go on the beach, but there certainly is police patrol of literary and dramatic beats. ♣ However, its supervision is usually more sensible than the hue-and-cry onslaughts of the volunteers. ♣ Policeman's motto: "I don't know nothin' much about art but I gotta good ide-ea about how far you can go, Mister. Or me, either."



The Best Things from PRINTLAND

Inside View of a Magazine

The popular impression of a magazine office seems to be of a place of dignified and awful silence, a sanctum in which elderly gentlemen, presumably bearded, read by a dim light the manuscripts submitted to them by the aspiring writers of the country and occasionally pick out one of sufficient literary merit to be acceptable. The general idea seems to be that once in so often these dignified editors get together a group of these manuscripts and send them to the printer as an issue of the magazine. According to this popular impression the editorial process is almost wholly judicial, the process of selecting manuscripts well enough written to be worthy of printing.

As a matter of fact, an editorial office is much like any other office. Editors are about as dignified and awful as most other people. And their work is less a work of selection than of planning, consulting, hunting out new and interesting authors and new and interesting kinds of material for the magazine—a distinctly constructive process.

This is not to say that an enormous number of manuscripts are not submitted to an enterprising modern magazine of high standing. At Harper's, for example, unsolicited manuscripts come pouring in at the rate of from seventy-five to a hundred a day; that means twenty-five thousand or more a year—a considerable number. They come from every part of the country and every sort of person. All of them have to be read. Some of the manuscripts submitted are very bad—even illiterate. Every one of them, however, has to be fairly considered as possible magazine material.

A question that editors are constantly asked is this: On what basis is an editorial decision made for or against a manuscript? Speaking for Harper's Magazine only, in the case of a story, the decision depends on its interest, its authentic human quality, its originality, and the distinction with which it is written—bearing in mind always that we must have variety. We dislike to publish in quick succession too many stories of the same sort. If, for instance, we find that we have

recently selected several tragic or sombre stories, no matter how powerful or effective they may be, we are likely for a time to look with special favor on a humorous or cheerfully entertaining story. But in general, we have no predilection for any special type; we want all types, provided they are ably written, interesting and real—I don't mean true, I mean genuine in their presentation of human nature in action.

In the case of articles, the subject is an important element. We want some of our articles to be timely; we want most of them to deal with subjects that come home to the daily lives of intelligent readers; and we want to cover so many different topics that the magazine will appeal to pretty nearly every sort of civilized taste. We want articles to be authoritative and brilliantly written.

But, as I have said, the selective process is second in importance to the constructive process. No magazine can afford to depend wholly upon the stream of unsolicited manuscripts that come in through the mails. That would be to throw itself over to chance instead of carving out its destiny by its own efforts. What most people do not realize about magazine editing is the large amount of material that is arranged for in advance. We, at Harper's, arrange for more than two-thirds of the contents of the magazine.

This may be done in a number of ways. The editor may decide on a subject of importance, select a writer competent to handle it and arrange with him for the article; or he may confer with a writer of known ability, discuss a number of possible subjects with him, and finally decide on one that is mutually satisfactory. Always he has to remember that every issue of his magazine must be as varied as a well-planned meal and that, like a good housekeeper, he must bear in mind its need for variety when ordering. The art of hitting on novel and interesting topics and getting them well handled is half the art of successful journalism.

There may be some to whom this policy of arranging for material in advance seems inconsistent with a zeal for literary values. There are people who think, perhaps, of literature as something which should spring unpremeditated from the mind of an inspired man, and it bothers them to think of editors deliberately considering qualities of timeliness and public importance and getting articles written to order which are likely to stir up discussions about the dinner table. But with all due regard for the opinion of these objectors, I believe they are wrong. Literature is not something apart from life; it should be the very stuff of life. What you and I think and feel and are worried about is and should be the raw material of good literature, and the editor is stimulating the production of good literature in the best way he knows when he takes matters into his own hands and arranges with the best-equipped authors to deal with

these vital subjects. Incidentally, this appears to be the best way to produce a magazine which will be no arid collection of tedious would-be masterpieces, but an active force in the thought and life of the day. — FREDERICK L. ALLEN, in *Franklin Squares Torch.*

Advertising Laughs

"Humor and Advertising Will Wed in the Future", is the heading in eccentric type over a series of advertisements that have been very successful in their whimsicality.

There is a slow creep toward fun in modern advertising. Very hesitant it is, and timid. One would suppose the writers were like Oliver Wendell Holmes in his poem, "The Height of the Ridiculous." He saw the button-bursting and convulsion-producing effects of his humor upon a certain man—"and since, I never dare to write as funny as I can!" Today's copywriters, or their masters, seemingly don't want consumers killed by extreme mirth. But they are losing this fear.

Will Rogers is writing ads for Bull Durham, poking fun at it and himself instead of boring the public with stodgy "reason-why." The change is more than refreshing.

Years ago a wave of ridicule swept over the Ford car, beginning here and ultimately flooding Europe. Hundreds of jokes were cracked at the tin Lizzies. But Ford seemed to have no fear that the "kidding" would slow up sales. Though the Ford car became as much a stock target of the paragraphers as the mother-in-law, Henry's vehicles have been selling at the rate of nine or ten thousand a day.

Finding that advertisers rather like mention, even though mocking, editors now do not suppress the humorists but allow all sorts of digs at "halitosis," "four out of five," "the two Smith Brothers, Trade and Mark," and the rest.

Advertising has in the past taken itself too seriously. It has often been deadly dull. The manufacturers seemed to think their baked beans, non-metallic garters, wind shields and folding umbrellas were as much a life-and-death matter to the public as to them. The light touch, the sense of proportion, have been missing. After all, fun is a part of existence and has its place in any kind of literature, even the commercial kind, so why not crack a joke occasionally in paid space?

Let's remember that America is a laughing nation and that the most successful trade name ever exploited, Uneeda Biscuit, is a play on words. The professional humorists may have a new and brilliant future before them as writers in paid space.—*"Four Eighteen."*

Famous Screenwright Tells of Success

June Mathis, who is perhaps the most famous writer of scenarios, contributes to the Motion Picture Director an article on her own career from which the following excerpts are taken:

Day after day I receive letters from various persons throughout this country and from Australia, New Zealand, Japan and other far-away places—all anxious to know the secret of my success and asking my advice. Nearly always they want to know why *their* stories do not sell, and what they can do to make them marketable. Often they send me a sample of their work. In many cases these stories are crude, school-girl or school-boy efforts, and have nothing to recommend them.

The other day a young man who had been trying for a long time to get a personal interview with me, finally succeeded during a lull in my work. He had ambitions to write, but confessed rather naively that while he had ideas he could not find the words to put them down on paper. I dismissed him with the advice that if he really had the urge to write, the words would come; that there was no magic talisman that I or anyone else could give him that would entice them.

And so I say to all those who really have a talent for writing; if they have the love of the game in their hearts, together with the fortitude to work and carry on, the opportunity will come. Many look at the monetary success of well-known writers and their whole thought is centered on that; whereas, if they will forget ultimate success and simply write because they cannot help writing, and for the very love of the work, success will come unawares—seemingly without striving.

When I was on the stage I seemed only to come in contact with people interested in theatricals—either those on the stage, or who had been on the stage or who had a relative there.

Stage life began to pall on me, and literary ambitions took hold of me. I first tried writing poetry—a sort of inspirational free verse. This was strange, because, while I had always been a great reader I had never cared particularly for poetry. This phase was followed by a desire to write stories; an indifference to my stage career developed and I began to make a close study of the different types I would come in contact with, and to watch for little dramatic or amusing situations that would crop up here and there. I began to meet writers and others interested in literature; editors and those who had friends or relatives connected with the writing game. And out of this grew my first contact with the moving picture industry. Soon I was devoting all my efforts to writing, having forgotten my former aspirations for the stage. I took a course in literature and story construction and began to absorb as much as possible along these lines; going constantly to the moving picture theatres to study the output of the various producers, until I found myself, as if by magic, in a motion picture studio, writing seriously for a director.

Those outside the motion picture business do not realize that people in the industry live pictures, eat pictures and dream pictures. In

other words, they think of nothing else; they become veritable slaves to the celluloid, being in a world to themselves. A scenario writer's life becomes just one scene after another; before she is through with one story she is thinking about and planning for another. And that is why it becomes more difficult for the amateur to break in—why the untrained writer cannot break down the wall. It is like trying to get China on the radio.

The trained writer understands the needs of the studios—is familiar with the pet ideas of directors—the ambitions and ideals of the studio executives. — *The Motion Picture Director of Hollywood.*

Outspoken Novels

Speaking, so to speak, gets outer and outer. Here is Mr. Bullitt, a young American of considerable talent, with a novel which his publishers call "very modern"; it has had, I believe, great success in Mr. Bullitt's own country; and for the life of me I cannot see that it is so very modern, or provides excuse for such great success, except on the ground that it says some things which are more usually implied or taken for granted.

I don't mean that it is indecent, I mean that it is ineffective. Mr. Bullitt wants to give the impression of, say, a violently passionate love scene in a bedroom. (See page 118, passage beginning: "His lips drained her eyes and mouth.") There is nothing immoral about passion, or love scenes, or bedrooms. There is nothing offensive to morality in Mr. Bullitt's treatment of them. His impropriety is purely esthetic. There are some things which can be said only by being left unsaid. A detailed description, of the kind called "daring," is precisely what is not wanted to create the atmosphere of passion: there is more of that atmosphere in one half line of "Othello" than in all the writhings and mouthings provided by the moderns. The external fact is often the least indicative, the least relevant; then the artist should not speak out, he should leave out. Discretion is the better part of daring.

Apart from his intimacies, Mr. Bullitt is, if anything, more conventional than most. His plot has two main threads, both old friends. One is the failure of a respectable and promising marriage through the inability of husband and wife to find common ground for their emotions; the other is the awkwardness of blue blood in a black world. The wife actually says to the husband, near the end:—

"Oh John! You've never understood me at all. . . . I thought you were what I wanted. You weren't. You couldn't be. It wasn't in you. You're too tender and gentle. Too much of a gentleman. And I've always wanted . . . somebody terribly strong, who'd take me without caresses, without gentleness, coarsely, brutally."

If this is modern, it has been so for a good long time. It is supposed by many industrious sociologists to go back to the sabre-tooth tiger or the Dreadful Dinotherium.

And as for the blue-blood—listen to John lecturing his brother about meeting fraud with fraud:—

"It seems to me that doing a thing like that, or even deciding to try to do it, will take out of us something we've always had, something that father had, and, so far as I know all the blessed Corseys back to Sir John the first, something mighty real, the thing probably that's kept us on top of the world for a good many centuries; our own standard."

The Corseys were, indeed hard put to it to keep their hands clean; they had only a few millions behind them, and one of the brothers had to give up the struggle and come to live in England, where there is no struggle, and clean hands are hardly noticed. But is it not odd that Mr. Bullitt, a man of the finest sympathies and of brilliant intelligence, should produce a social document of this character? Some of the scenes in his book are beautifully realized; but that merely makes us feel that "It's Not Done" should have been done better.

And with "Galahad" also. But in Mr. Erskine's hands the theme becomes ironical. His special line of modernity leads him to undo the ancients, he attributes to Camelot the codes and conversations of Belgravia. He has some wit and insight, and could probably write a good novel, if he were content to deal with Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Robinson instead of with Guinevere and Elaine. Guinevere is supposed to say to Galahad: "All women are alike, my dear boy—rather, in the presence of men all women act the same way." It is conceivable that Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Jones, or Mrs. Robinson might talk like that, if she were sufficiently silly; nothing whatever is gained by giving vulgarity the labels of grandeur. It is, of course, a truth, though it is scarcely a discovery, that there are some things in which humanity does not change:—

"And when I die, be sure you let me know, Great Homer dy'd 3000 years ago."

But you cannot modernize Lancelot and Arthur, for they are eternal.—GERALD GOULD, *in London Observer.*

Rider Haggard's Autobiography

His adventures in many lands, particularly in Africa, where he gained a wealth of material for his novels, his early literary struggles, politics, agriculture, land settlement, psychic experiences, and a note on religion are among the many matters dealt with in the fascinating autobiography of the late Sir H. Rider Haggard.

"I have met many men, I have seen many lands, I have known many emotions—all of them, I think, except that of hate; I have played many parts," the author says in his introduction. "From all this sum of things, tangible or intangible, hidden not in the heart and the memory, some essence may perhaps be pressed which is worthy of preservation, some picture painted at which eyes unborn may be glad to look. At least such is my hope."

In his younger days Haggard read for the Bar. Dealing with his hopes for a legal career, he writes: —"In an unfortunate hour, considered from this point of view, I employed my somewhat ample leisure in chambers in writing "King Solomon's Mines." That metaphorically, settled my legal hash."

"Well do I remember how," he goes on to say later, "when one day I was seated in this (the Probate and Divorce) Division watching a case or devilling for somebody, I unconsciously inscribed my name on the nice white blotting paper before me. Presently from behind me I heard a whisper from some solicitor—I think that was his calling—whom business had brought to the court.

"Are you Rider Haggard, the man who wrote 'King Solomon's Mines'?" he said, staring at the tell tale blotting paper.

"I intimated that such was really my name.

" ' Then confound you, sir. You kept me up till three o'clock this morning. But what are you doing here in a wig and gown—what are you doing here'?"

At one time Haggard was ambitious to enter Parliament, and in the 1895 election he did in fact contest a seat and was nearly successful, but he abandoned that ambition later, on the score of cost and interference with his literary work.

He found, he goes on, that he must needs earn his living by his pen, remarking: "Now of this I should not have complained had I been in a position to choose my own subjects. But unhappily those subjects which attract me, such as agricultural and social research, are quite unremunerative. Everybody talks of the resulting volumes, which receive full and solemn review in all the newspapers, but very few people buy them in these days."

It was Haggard's lot to cater for the reader of fiction. "I will not pretend I have found, or find, the occupation altogether congenial," he adds, "perhaps because at the bottom of my heart I share some of the British contempt for the craft of story-writing."

He recalls discussing this matter with Mr. Kipling, whose views, Haggard says, were similar, if not identical. "He pointed out, I recollect," Haggard adds, "that all fiction is in its essence an appeal to the emotions, and that this is not the highest class of appeal."

Haggard began writing—to the magazines—when he was in South Africa, where, at the age of nineteen, he went as a sort of un-official private secretary to Sir Henry Bulwer, the Governor of Natal. His first book, "Cetewayo and his White Neighbours," dealt with the contemporary politics of that country.

His first novel "Dawn", he attributes to an incident which occurred at Norwood, where, with his wife, he had taken a furnished house. "At the church which my wife and I attended we saw sitting near to us one Sunday, a singularly beautiful and pure-faced young lady. Afterwards we agreed that

this semi-divine creature — on whom to the best of my knowledge I have never set eyes again from that day to this—ought to become the heroine of a novel. So then and there we took paper, and each of us began to write the said novel. I think that after she had completed two or three folio sheets my wife ceased from her fictional labours. But growing interested, I continued mine, which resulted in the story called 'Dawn'."

"The Witch's Head" followed, written while he was still studying for the Bar. Passing his final law examination he determined to give up fiction and apply himself to the law, but a perusal of a review of Stevenson's "Treasure Island" awakened ambitions to "write a book for boys." "King Solomon's Mines" resulted.—*Belfast News Letter* (Belfast, Ireland).

Dumbbelling the Writers

Traveling from the East to California, Joseph Hergesheimer stopped long enough in Kansas City to make a few remarks about the lack of intelligence in authors. He spoke of it as an obvious fact, nothing to be sad or surprised about, but the simple and not undesirable truth.

While newspaper men attending the novelist gasped with astonishment, he assured them that he was himself unintelligent. "Intelligence? Huh, I have a $50 a week secretary who has more intelligence than I ever had." Then to what is the success of a writer who has produced more than a score of novels and 500 short stories, to be attributed?

One might think that the power of close observation combined with imagination and a rather subtle understanding of human nature bore some relation to intelligence and to his success. But after all, the writer himself ought to know, and he gave it as his belief that his production of fiction is due to the habit of writing 3,000 words a day and to the fact that he has not had the "disadvantage of an education."

Putting his statements together, one is bound to reach the conclusion that his definition of intelligence is mixed up with a notion of schooling. His secretary, who is trained to spell, punctuate, and combine nouns and verbs correctly, may be intelligent as well, but these things are not infallible evidence of that quality. Mr. Hergesheimer himself is probably no less intelligent than most authors, and they will scarcely agree meekly to his assertion.—*The New York Times.*

Summary of the Screen

The year 1926 was not a memmorable year from the standpoint of achievement. It had its high moments, with several exceptional box office successes, but it developed little to indicate any sincere effort for advancement. All in all, its tempo was that of "mark time" rather than "forward march."

Upon the threshold of the new year, however, there are several problems confronting the industry which promise to motivate it to-

ward dynamics whether it will or no.

First of all there is the question of subject matter to be treated in coming productions. The past year held to the tested types of marital mix-ups, more or less innocuous love themes, straightaway adventure stories, glorifications of the Cinderella yarn, sob stuff and the sex and jazz productions for peep-show mentalities. Some of these were well enough done to lift them from the current mediocrity, as, for instance, "Beau Geste" and "The Waltz Dream." Most of them were not.

There were exceptions, also, in types. Variety demonstrated unequivocably that motion may be made a keynote of motion pictures to distinguish them from stage productions and written matter. Potemkin showed that humanity in gross may be made interesting—an important item in view of Hollywood's star system. "La Boheme" and "Stella Dallas" demonstrated that all picture show patrons are not addicted to unadulterated potions of Edgar A. Guest-ism and Sunday epics of optimism. De Mille wasn't crucified for portraying the controversial Bolshevik in unbiased colors. "The Scarlet Letter" overcame the opposition which threatened when it was generally learned that the ministry was portrayed in the picture as containing persons who might be less than 100 per cent perfection. Von Sternberg felt his wings in "The Exquisite Sinner." They melted in the sun, but it is to be hoped he has inspired not only himself but also others to attempt to fly above the ground.

These, however, were exceptions to a more or less monotonous year, as were certain other pictures (elsewhere enumerated) which, while they contained no new phase, were so well done as to deserve mention among the year's best.

Whether the pictures can continue for another year to serve up the hackneyed and usual themes is a matter for speculation. It is certain nothing new can be said on any of these non-vital topics and, judging from 1926, treatment of them is equally near exhaustion. If some one goes adventuring and strikes "gold" in a new field, it is certain there will be a stampede in the studios far surpassing that westward in '48.

The European influence also is bound to have an effect. Germany is showing an increasingly masterful treatment of theme, as opposed to the American conservatism. Russia is combining the Germans' art with stories as interesting as those told in America—and much better told. There are a majority of American directors who still believe the public will accept anything of story pretentiousness. It is becoming increasingly doubtful.

If, as seems apparent, direction is soon to become paramount over cast and story, one may look for a weeding out of current "stellar" directors. Those who cannot progress must make way. It is not improbable that the year will see an increasing number of author-

directors, as the man who first visualizes a cohesive art story will be much more ably fitted to transfer it to the screen than one whose only vision is based upon the cold phrases of a scenario.

Where the stories will come from if the looming type of picture visualizes is not now predictable. Certainly not from the "best sellers." The screen, indeed, will become an art surpassing the "best sellers," as it will strive for unity of effect in contradistinction to mere narration.

Parenthetically, it is interesting to note that the public taste in reading matter is constantly turning toward the more serious at such times as it is not reading the nation's simon-pure jig-makers. Biography and auto-biography, period history, technical books, and critical works, are winning constantly in favor. Will such works offer the screen its opportunity? it is a question not to be dismissed too assuredly.

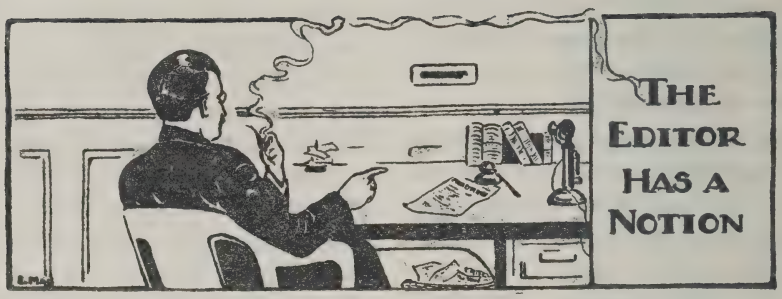
Coming to specific instances, the year 1926 closed with an amazing output of war stories and sea stories. "What Price Glory" and "The Big Parade" were the two aftermaths of the late conflict which stood out in this category. They were perhaps the Alpha and Omega of the war and will stand unequaled until a really great war story is written. There is none such on the horizon and, as the apex in current war pictures has been reached, it is believable the decline in such productions will be rapid. As for sea stories, there is the expense. Their decline will be equally rapid.

Mechanically the year produced the Vitaphone, whose maximum possibility is far from reached yet; and the three-dimension picture. The former is certain to have a far-reaching effect. The latter may, or may not. After the novelty of witnessing such pictures wears off, there is almost certain to be a reaction toward the accustomed two-dimension visualization. The final adoption of the new invention consequently will be slow, if at all.

These latter problems, however, are secondary to that of the prospective change of theme, the translation, one may say, from the effort toward "bigger and better" pictures to that of "bigger and deeper" pictures.

Who will be the pathfinder, if any, is not to be determined by guesswork. D. W. Griffith is in town, Rex Ingram is a possibility, Von Stroheim and Von Sternberg are also, as is some European importation. Certain it is, however, that it will not be one of the school of showmanship, generaled by De Mille, nor mere epic-builders of the Cruze characteristics.

Much is expected to depend upon the filming and the reception of Dreiser's "American Tragedy." If the book is not devitalized for screen purposes, it will be a fair test of whether the films will turn toward the most likely field for their next efforts, and will become leaders instead of followers of public opinion. — *Hollywood Filmograph.*



Not all idol-smashers are wilful iconoclasts. Some are ignorant; others are deeply absorbed in an idea; most are simply cross-eyed and unable to see things in proportion.

There is no use in trying to argue a man into having a respect for the English language—which is sacro-sanct to many of us—because the very need for argument on such a subject argues that argumentation would not convince him. What is lacking is an understanding of the fact that our English is an institution which has come to its present form slowly, over many centuries, like the most widely accepted conventions of society. Any "writer" who is so unaware of what the fundamentals of English are, or who blithely gangs his ain gait irrespective of the landmarks of its origins and growth, would do well to make up his mind that information should precede reformation. Getting into print is less important than mastering the medium of expression.

"Where ignorance is bliss", some waggish liar has convinced multitudes, "'tis folly to be wise", and as a consequence these same multitudes take no pains to find out whether their bliss may not be making them to appear more foolish than any wisdom gained from disillusionment possibly could.

The Editor thinks now of a literary society of student days. Every Friday night during the college year its members met for such "exercises" as everyone knows without the necessity for description. One night Charlie—a callow youth of village upbringing who had now and then sampled the city—appeared on the platform to sing a popular song. This he did passably well, until he came to the chorus. Then he put into erection a divertisement conceived in secret and brought forth to the astonishment of his fellow members: Charlie did "a little vaudeville stuff." If his dance had not been lamentable it would have been funny. The spectators simply squirmed and maintained an icy silence.

And why? What was wrong with a little harmless posturing? It wasn't "improper"; nor was it too badly done; neither was it more awkward than many a *pas*

seul perpetrated in a dancing exhibition. What was wrong? The young admirer of the Varieties had simply done what "wasn't done"—danced an old-time Bowery dance where it was not wanted. It was in bad taste, and everyone but Charlie recognized that it was. So his feeble little attempt at innovation did not receive even the praise of faint damns. It was merely received—if one may stretch the word—in decorous, though red-faced silence.

Of course all this occurred before many who read this were born. (Yes, the Editor is as old as that, poor thing!), but folks are much the same now as then, and view coldly any palpable effort to be "smart". That is one of their ways of intimating to the "Smart Alec" that there is something he ought to know which he does not. Lots of Charlies are roaming the world, piping when they should keep silence, and keeping silence when they are expected to pipe and they are not always fortunate enough to try a silly little vaudeville turn before a group of friends polite enough not to arise and chant, "Out the window he must go!" which is a modern translation of "Get the hook!"

In its last analysis, whatever that may mean precisely, Charlie's fault was in trying to appear something that he was not, and trying it in the wrong place. The feeling that his fellow-students had is that of the reader when he comes across a piece of bad taste in a magazine or a newspaper.

"But," you say, "if the editor buys it, why do you blame Charlie?"

Righto! Some editors are Charlies too, it seems.

One piece of pretension that makes the discerning reader blush for both author and editor is the St. Vitus Dance style of description. This is the way it runs—or jumps:

> Cloudless skies. No, not cloudless. Almost. Only one tiny patch of fleecy whiteness. in the south. Otherwise, all a deep, peaceful blue. A symbol, this, to Beatrice—a symbol of her honeymoon, her ecstatic honeymoon, all those swift, brilliant days with scarcely a care to fleck their lovely skies. Every day just like this one—perfect? Well, almost perfect. Only a single cloud. No matter about that one—only one—just a little cloud—still—

Wait a minute—the Editor is out of breath! That was a bumpy road, with never a verb to serve as shock-absorber.

What a pesky breed of attitudinizers it is that shies at a harmless, necessary predicate! Some know no better; some are thinking only of impressing their readers; some are out-and-out iconoclasts with no regard of the English that instructed folk hold dear. At any rate, let us ask Mrs. Webster to put a new recipe in her well-known Cook Book of English:

> **ver'bo-phobe**, *n*, [F. *verbe*, L. *verbum*, a word, a verb + Gr. *phobos*, fear.] Lit. One who is morbidly afraid of a verb. The victim of an acute literary disease akin to Fine Writing.

No, it doesn't serve, to argue with a verbophobe; it is better either to educate him or to laugh at him.

While she is about it, Mrs. Webster might add another recipe to her cook-book:

> **verbophile**, *n.* [F. *verbe*, L. *verbum*, a word, a verb + Gr. *philos*, loving.] a. One who is excessively fond of verbs. b. An undiscriminating lover of verbs.

A literary diagnostician would say that the verbophile is of two sorts, as the foregoing learned definition points out. The first type is so afraid of being a verbophobe that he would not dare omit a single verb. In his excess, he is almost as silly as the chap who shows off his scorn of the instruments of predication. If it ever occurs to him that the occasional deletion of a verb easily "understood" would add vividness and speed to his sentences, he is too strait to dispense with one of them. In fact, he goes to the other extreme and fairly shoves them into his sentences with violence. Here he goes:

> Elwood was, is and always will be an extremist. In this he was whole-heartedly endorsed, aided and abetted by his partner, for Hines also was, is and always will be an extremist. In fact, it was an extremist firm. Whatever these two, severally and jointly, suspected, thought, believed, decided, declared or did they suspected, thought, believed, decided, declared or did with an intemperance that would delight the secretary of the Bootleggers' Union.

The other sort of verbophile has heard it asserted that "said" is used by fictionists too frequently in dialogue. He sees the point at once and resolves never to be guilty of such excess. Thenceforward he pores over the dictionary and the thesaurus to uncover verbs that shall not only convey the fact that a speaker has just said what he has said, but will also imply something of the speaker's mood, posture, or action. In fact, he now and then enriches the language with new verbs. And this is the result:

> "Good morning, Grace," articulated Henry.
>
> Grace did not contribute any reply.
>
> Henry was hurt. After a long moment, "Good morning!" he expostulated.
>
> Grace cerebrated that her fiance might withdraw his matutinal remark if she failed now to reciprocate his salutation. So she smiled wanly and casually emitted:
>
> "Good morning, Hen." She shrewdly estimated that this tenderly familiar name would poultice the gaping wound which her previous cruel silence had incised.
>
> But she had congealed her fond lover once too often by her Articness.
>
> Henry was no longer exacerbated—he was iced. With a shrug he haughtily salaamed, and then ambulated away.
>
> Grace was deserted to masticate her fingernails in silent disappointment.

All verbophobes and verbophiles are required to stay after school and write the word "moderation" one hundred times. Then they may go home.

The Word Page

The Greek root *therme,* heat, has given us several words now in wide use—"thermal", hot; "thermometer", a measure for heat; "thermostat", a heat regulator; "thermostatics", the science of heat; and many other combinations, mostly technical. Some of these words begin with letters other than *t;* as, "isotherm", an imaginary line joining points on the earth's surface having the same temperature at a given time, or for a given period; and "isothermal", equality of temperature.

In this connection it may be noted that the Greek word for summer, *theros,* is closely related to *therme.*

The Latin word *sedeo,* I sit (with *sessum,* the perfect participial form), gives us a number of words with interesting derivative meanings. A bishop's "see" is literally the seat of his authority, hence the center of his spiritual domain. "Sediment" is that which settles after being suspended in a fluid. A "sedentary" occupation is one that involves much sitting. One is "sedate" who is calm—as if his emotions were well seated, so to say. A "session" of an organization is a sitting of that body, and the one who "presides" over it sits in authority over its deliberations. An "assiduous" student is one who sits steadily at his studies, as it were, therefore he is devoted or diligent. "Insidious" means lying in wait, or sitting to entrap, more literally, as might a hunter. One "subsides" when he sits down—gives over effort, gives in because he can stand up no more. One office holder "supercedes" another when he takes his seat, either figuratively or literally. There are many other words in this group, all just as interesting as those I have cited.

The original meaning of "corn" was a single grain, as in the Biblical phrase, "a corn of wheat". In England, "corn" is still a generic name for any kind of grain. American readers have often been misled by this broad usage into thinking that an English writer's "a field of corn" meant " a field of maize", whereas it might have been standing wheat.

The word "pen" comes from the Latin *penna,* a feather, since pens were originally cut from quills.

"Thoroughgoing" is really derived from "through going", and colloquially the latter is sometimes used for the former.

Contributions to Experience Meeting are welcomed and payment is made in the form of subscriptions to the magazine. Contributions should not be more than 300 words, because of space limitations. Since unavailable manuscript cannot be returned, carbon copies should be kept.

I've found a most excellent substitute for the more or less expensive 3 x 5 cards that are used in the regular card index filing boxes. At a price of five cents for over two hundred one need not skimp on filing away notes of the most trivial thing, which later on may prove to be a priceless thought to the writer.

At most of the Woolworth 5, 10, & 15 cent stores you can buy the little Sunrise paper scratch pads that come in packages of three for a nickel—one pad pink, one yellow, and the other white. These may be torn apart into single sheets, or used in pad form, tearing the leaves off and filing as you use them.

Having the slips of paper in colors helps, too, in classifying your notes. The pink ones I use for all notes directly pertaining to people, the yellow ones for places and things, while the white ones I use for plots, themes, etc.

The regular store cards are, no doubt, nicer, still they take up more room, are much heavier in weight, and what counts more with many of us, cost about ten times more than these little substitutes.—J. M. L.

When sending out a MS. for the first time, note in your record the amount of postage required. Then, if it does come back for another trip, time is saved, since there is no need to weigh it again. Of course if you sell much, you have a postal scale. The satisfaction of being business-like, as well as the saving of time will pay for it.

The new editor of the Sunday Magazine of the New York Herald-Tribune is Mrs. William Brown Meloney, and it goes without saying that those who contribute to that publication will receive the most fair treatment. Mrs. Meloney asks accuracy, however, as those who remember her editorship of the Delineator will recall. The Herald-Tribune Sunday Magazine pays on publication.

The MacFadden publications, in their contest department, quickly weed out the totally undesirable and return. If a story lingers, one knows they are considering it. If returned it comes with a different kind of rejection. And finally, perhaps a note comes that they are holding a story for that interesting occasion when prizes are awarded. May all good H. C. S. Folks get into that last class, for

the MacFadden magazines pay excellently well.

Comfort, Augusta, Maine, not only buys short stories, but illustrates them in the best manner. The artist really reads one's tale, it is plain. Their rates are very good, and payment is so prompt that one gets that happy glow which comes so seldom.

The government stamped envelopes are very good, both as to quality and cheapness. They are tough and light, and there is at least one stamp on them which cannot be pulled off. Stamps mysteriously disappear from return envelopes, sometimes, and a huge postage-due bill confronts the author.—M. L.

Anything that will aid a writer, or would-be writer, to keep everlastingly at it, or that will stimulate him to increased effort and increased production, is worth while. I keep a pad upon my desk to be used for writing schedules. I do all my work at night and the last thing I do before closing my desk is to write down a program for the next night. I make this schedule pretty stiff for I know what I would like to get done and since it does not have to be done at the time, more work is outlined than would be if I were going to sit right down and dig into it. Then when the time comes I hate to fall below the schedule so I go at it a little harder than if I had planned nothing.

Another aid is a book in which is kept a record of the number of words of original stuff completed each night and also the number of words of finished material. Each night I attempt to complete something to be sent out. If I am writing a long article or story that necessarily takes several nights to complete, I work up a shorter article or humorous material of some sort to be mailed out. I stopped this practice once but I found that I did not get nearly the amount of work finished as I did when I made it a point to get something started out each day.

One way to gain knowledge of the material desired by the magazines is by reading the magazines. But unless one has a very good memory he will forget, to some extent, the exact nature of material each uses. I overcome this difficulty by listing each story I read. I have a loose leaf ledger and each prominent magazine is given one or more pages, as required. The rulings of the ledger sheets divides them off into the proper spaces for the following information concerning the stories read, each story getting a line across the page: Author's name, issue of magazine, title of story, type of story, locale, comments upon the handling of the material, and the plot told in a dozen or so words. The last two items must be written in their proper space in very small writing, making about three lines of the writing fit in the space between the ruled lines on the page. This does not take much time and is scarcely any trouble. The brief outline of the plot is usually enough to bring the story back to my mind and with the other records I can get a fairly

good line on the stories that have been printed.—Z. L. K.

Rose Deshler, editor of the Household Department of the Household Magazine writes, "I am always interested in receiving new and original recipes that are economical and tasty—recipes that show how to "dress up" the old foods in a new way. I am also interested in the short cuts you use in your daily routine to lighten your housework so that you may have time for other things." This department pays $5.00 for the best household item each month, and $1.00 each for every other published.

Much has been written on the subject of studying the literary market and on the timeliness of subject matter. A recent experience of mine may serve as a helpful illustration. I prepared a manuscript for a certain magazine which I thought right in line with the type of material which the editors were publishing. But the manuscript was returned with the magazine's usual courteous rejection slip. I made a careful survey of the manuscript and decided that it had probably been submitted too late to be used in the issue for which it was intended. Otherwise, I believed the article to be just what the editor of that magazine desired. I held the article for eight months and sent it again to the same magazine. This time it was accepted and I received a check from the editor.—N. R. Mc.

The Black Diamond, 431 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, "the official organ of the coal industry," uses descriptions of the plants of retail coal merchants with photographs showing methods of handling and storing fuel. According to a letter from A. T. Murphy, the editor, they pay $10.00 a page for type matter and $2.00 each for acceptable pictures.

Far West Illustrated, a Street & Smith publication, New York, returned three Western photos advising me in a kind letter that they were changing the make-up of the magazine and will use drawn illustrations rather than photographs as were used at first.

The Highway Magazine, 209-215 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, uses stories of highway construction and maintenance. The encountering of unusual obstacles in road building, when well written, always wins their attention, and they use photographs with stories, paying well for brief articles of 1,000 words or so with two or more photos.

Kodakery, published by the Eastman Kodak Co., Rochester, N. Y., objected to illustrations accompanying an article submitted to them, saying that the photographs could not be published without obtaining the written consent of every person whose likeness appeared in the pictures. The editor in an instructive letter said:

"New York may be the only state in the Union that has so strict a law regarding the use of portraits and as you will appreciate, it imposes quite a handicap on our obtaining the kinds of pictures that we sometimes desire to use."

Field & Stream, New York, is in-

terested in practical stuff well disguised and put up in readable form. The editor says:

"I believe the American sportsman likes to learn something but I think you have to teach him unconsciously. If he thought he was going to school he wouldn't read it. Good live stuff of from 1200 to 1500 words or thereabouts with an illustration or two is rare."

Travel, 7 West 16th St., New York, returns manuscripts with a form letter of rejection wherein the reason for rejection is checked. Noted on the list and probably frequent causes of rejections are: too long; inadequate text; inadequate illustrations; similar material on hand; similar material used very recently; wrong locality for present use. An additional note is to the effect that the magazine does not use verse or news stories and that it very rarely accepts either pictures without text or text without pictures.—W. C. K.

Editor and Publisher, Suite 1700 Times Bldg., New York, is a weekly publication devoted to the interests of newspapers, both from the editorial and advertising standpoint. They are very nice to deal with, report on material promptly and usually pay $2.50 a column. Material consists of short feature stories on prominent men and women in the newspaper field, news items, etc. One dollar is paid for each "hunch"—a suggestion for news stories, etc., and $1 each is paid for "Dollar Pullers," similar suggestions on advertising. They are interested, however, only in the daily newspaper field. A recent contribution was returned with the following comment, "Our one and only reason for returning it is because the Whiting News is a weekly paper and ours is the daily field. We would appreciate your submitting some other articles as we like the way you handled this one."

The Woman's Viewpoint, 342 Madison Ave., New York, has a page labelled "Odds and Ends", which is just that, mostly original humorous scraps of various lengths. For the best Odd and End printed each month a prize of $5.00 is offered.

College Stories, 80 Lafayette Street, New York, is now offering $5.00 for each advice column printed. An example, "It's a long lane that has no parking places."

National Printer Journalist, Milwaukee, Wis., is now paying one-half cent a word, plus space rates for photographs, for feature stories pertaining to how newspapers are run. Articles may be either about dailies or weeklies.—E. T.

In returning shorter material the editor of the Boy-Craft Company, Box 35, Morris Heights, New York, says that they are glad to consider manuscripts of 2500 words or more on informational subjects of interest to boys for publication in booklet form and also enclose a catalog of the booklets they publish for suggestion and information as to their needs.

Boy's World, Elgin Illinois, a David C. Cook publication uses a

number of short articles of general interest to boys. The rate of payment is $4.00 per 1000 words with a very small allowance for drawings or photos.—H. C. K.

Outdoor Recreation, Mount Morris, Ill., has helped me in keeping down the high cost of postage. Kink departments on fishing, hunting and motor camping pay $2.00 each for kinks that are worth while. I have landed six of these out of ten submitted in the last year. Where-to-Go department of this magazine pays $5.00 each for articles of about 400 words on conditions in regard to outdoor sports in any locality the writer happens to be familiar with. It is necessary to write the editor of this department before submitting articles.

Hunting and Fishing, 275 Newberry St., Boston, Mass., paid $3.00 for two pictures and a write-up of a turkey hunt. I find it is easy to place material with these magazines, especially if one has pictures to go with it.—J. C. F.

Strange things come a writer's way whether she sells anything or not.

Recently I took out of my file a manuscript that had lain idle since its return, daring the fifth rejection slip. It needed recopying, so I set to work without rereading the story. On page three I found some corrections that were made with a pencil. I was puzzled as I always make my corrections on the typewriter or with a fountain pen. Besides, the writing was in a strange hand.

But since it was only a few words I went on copying until on page six I came to some strange markings. Then I picked up the manuscript and began to read.

On page seven was written in parenthesis, "your meaning is not quite clear here. Whom do you mean?"

I looked all through. The whole eighteen pages were corrected and several suggestions were made! On page seventeen at the bottom was written, "Very good but hardly suitable. Let us see something shorter and with little less action!!!!"

Now I ask you, "Did the first editor put that there—or the last one? And if the last editor put it there how come the four exclamation points? Why did the Editor correct it in the first place? Why hadn't I taken the trouble to glance through the manuscript after each trip?"

I don't know. But I do know that it taught me a good lesson. At first I was humiliated, mortified and ready to stick my head in the sand forever so far as my "career" was concerned. But before the day was over I was laughing with those four (three-two-one) editors who received that manuscript with it's strange markings!

My deepest regret now is that I don't know who did it. I want to thank him humbly because on looking through other manuscripts I've found other things—not quite so bad as that but bad enough.—S. R. C.

The Pacific Drug Review, 35 N. Ninth Street, Portland, Oregon, which has accepted several of my articles, reiterated in declining one on "Display", a rule that the trade-magazine writer should keep constantly in mind. "The enclosed is too general for our purposes. We require specific instructive matter on window display telling the druggist what to put in and where to put it." It seems this point cannot be stated too often. The article rewritten was accepted.

The editors of The Modern Stationer, Giftwares, and Luggage and Hand-Bags, 1181 Broadway, New York, state their needs as follows: "Articles describing new business methods, clever window trims, interior arrangements, training of salespeople, credits, advertising, etc., are always desired if they are actually in use by a stationer or gift dealer. . . . Particularly desirable for The Modern Stationer are articles concerning sales of leather goods, gifts, toys and games or greeting cards in stationery stores. Pictures of gift shops (window displays and interiors) are desired by Giftwares. Luggage and Hand-Bags will use stories of leather-goods stores, or of handbag sections in department stores. Material of this character will be given prompt and careful attention and be paid for at an acceptable rate."

If you are addicted to brilliant ideas, the Massey and Massey Company, Manufacturing Chemists, Chicago, will be glad to pay for them — always of course, if they are adapted to their needs. Such are desired for use on the Billy Freezem Blotters. "Please note that we do not use epigrams, humorous fillers, poetry, mother-in-law jokes or other miscellaneous material. We solicit original clever ideas relative to the ice-cream industry, carried out to a humorous conclusion. . .Contributions should not be much over 100 words in length. For acceptable material that requires little or no revision, we pay three to four cents a word. Usable ideas, $1.50." They pay on acceptance.—P. R.

I often see suggestions concerning openings for writers in the great world of trade journals. These suggestions seem usually to have to do with the writing of trade material. But I want to add my word about straight fiction in these trade journals. I have found a ready field here for such fiction as is usually found in the regular "mail order" magazines. For such fiction as they have accepted from me these magazines have paid from $5.00 to $25.00 for stories from one to three thousand words. The one thousand to fifteen-hundred word stories, however, meet with quicker approval than longer ones. Within the last few weeks I have sold to The United Drug Company for their Rexall Magazine and to the Hopkins-Burmeister Company for their Druggist's Own Paper, both of which are listed in "Where and How to Sell."—L. S.

When the Writer Reads

A Dictionary of Modern English Usage

In a Venetian shop window recently appeared this suggestive sign-card: "English Spoken Here; American Understood." On this text the present reviewer might write a chapter, but restrains himself. It is enough to say that British English is not always American English—the order here is intentional—because the former has in general adhered to older forms more faithfully than has the latter. In other words, the younger country, more resilient, more alert, but not so well grounded in letters, has boldly undertaken to cut away cumbersome elements of the old language—sometimes to its detriment, but oftener to its betterment. We are, of course, not now writing of colloquial usage but of the literate if not of the scholarly.

H. W. Fowler, who is one of the authors of "The King's English", and the several editions of "The Oxford Dictionary", is of course an authority, and those who care enough for the purity of English, as every American writer should, to compare our practices in English with those that are in vogue in the British Isles, will find this a very valuable work, and most useful. It contains well over 700 pages of compact material, arranged alphabetically in double columns, so that reference is easy. Indeed, in appearance it is a companion to the invaluable "Skeats' Etymological Dictionary", published by the same house.

The scope of the work is wide, giving English spellings, pronunciations when desirable, notes on reasons why a certain usage is preferred, references to word- and phrase-origins, and in general a wealth of material on present-day usage of English material. The comparisons of British and American usages, though infrequent, are illuminating. Oxford University Press, London and New York.

Writer's and Artist's Year Book 1927

This is an annual British publication giving the requirements of British journals and magazines, syndicates, Australian, New Zealand journals and Colonial journals, all in separate groups in alphabetical arrangement. There is also a list of American journals and magazines, somewhat abbreviated. There follow lists of British, Colonial and American publishers, art agents and British and American literary agents. The extra features

include replies to frequently-put questions, information with regard to publisher's agreements, dramatics rights, British copyright, etc. Essays deal with the magazine page, the technical article, writing for the juvenile market, broadcasting, writing and placing plays, photographs and greeting card markets and photograph purchasers. Societies of leading journalists, and authors' and artists' clubs are named. All in all, this book is to be recommended thoroughly for those who wish to cultivate the British market. Published by A. & C. Black, Soho Square, London, N. W.

Plot and Idea Psychology

This is not a book on how to write stories, but rather a psychological explanation of the manner in which the reader's mind reacts to the particular sort of creative literary process known by its results as "fiction."

The topics taken up are the desires and rights of readers, logical story solutions, aesthetic, psychic and ironical "appeals" and the philosophic bases that condition narrative.

The classifications are supported by a large number of well-chosen and skillfully condensed plot and outline examples. Altogether the author, Benjamin Christopher Leeming, has written a volume very helpful to the writer who wishes to explore the borderlands of fictional creation and appreciation. The M. H. Schroeder Co., New York.

The Art of Narration

For this anthology of the various forms of narrative apart from the plotted story—expository, reminiscent, travel, biographical narrative, etc—we are indebted to the authors, Mary Ellen Chase and Frances K. del Plaine of the University of Minnesota.

It is rather unfortunate that J. M. Thomas, who writes the preface, feels compelled to raise the value of the types of story dealt with by depreciating "the mechanized short-story of the correspondence schools".

The so-called "mechanized short-story" is a straw man— a fallacy. The short-story (not in the least a machine product today and never taught as such in the standard texts or better-known schools of the short-story) predominates in the magazines solely because readers get more out of it, and editors have readers to please instead of college professors.

Each type of writing must rest on its own reason for being. The explanatory sections of this book are uncommonly well done, and the extensive range of examples well selected. The value to a practical writer of such a study as this lies in the fact that more and more the divergent types of narrative tend to intermingle in the constantly varied and highly amplified (far beyond the earlier and more formalized tales that expository and historical narrative, for example, stem from) stories that modern readers so definitely react to. F. S. Crofts & Co., New York.

The Writer's Monthly

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Return postage must accompany all regular articles intended for publication.

In no case can short items for the Departments be returned if unavailable.

Notice of accepted material will be sent promptly with payment on acceptance. However, items for "Experience Meeting" will be paid for only in shorter or longer subscriptions to *The Writer's Monthly*, to be sent to any desired person. Items of news will not be paid for.

Vol. XXIX APRIL No. 4

It is a fortunate thing for the the race that human beings tend to extremes; else were there but little progress. When once an idea possesses a generation there arise priests and priestesses to deify the Idea, erect to it altars, and—the most fanatical among them—cast into the fiery furnace all those who at the sound of the cymbals fail to bow down and worship. We need devotees and enthusiasts to overcome the inertia that grows out of contented custom.

It is by reason of this altogether human and all but universal reverence for cults and their fads that ideas which once held the central places on various altars come later to be counted as of little worth; and for the same reason those who have the weakness to cherish old standards, and so do not fly readily to the new, sometimes sit by and with a sort of whimsical sadness observe the desolation of the groves that only yesterday were adorned with shrines whose sacred figures have been incontinently thrown down.

But the figure has been pressed far enough: All this is to say that discriminating readers in every era cannot be expected to rest quite happy when their cherished criteria of excellence are regarded lightly and new ones acclaimed in the public prints, in gatherings of more or less genuine thinkers, and by the choosers of books for libraries.

Matthew Arnold in a few acute phrases hit off the salient characteristics of four or five great nations, and James Bryce has done a like thing for the political periods through which the United States has passed. Similarly, some genius will arise to crystallize the literary spirit of the victorian era, the quarter-century that succeeded it, and the post-war period in which we are now living. In any such brief characterization of the present literary era three words would be prominent: Practicality, Forthrightness, and Immediacy. And three lesser words, each growing out of the other: Disillusionment, Bluntness, and Naturalism; or, put in negative terms, the dethronement of Idealism, the

break-down of Reverence, and the decay of Romanticism.

No revolution ever was all good; iconoclasm is sure to smash some icons that later will be deeply regretted. So, times of change should be thinking times, and not merely eras of questing for the new; for not all change is progress.

One precious element above others we have lost out of our typical present-day literature (to use a perhaps too-broad term), and that is Nobility. Only now and then do we feel the tensity, the elevation, the high emotion aroused by a truly noble scene. Drama we have, certainly, and emotional depth; and sincerity to an admirable extent—an extent that quite atones for many other losses. But nobility of character-conception, of vision, of sacrifice, of life-climax? Very little, nowadays.

But it will return. Good things always do—because they can never die.

What an author is counts for more than what he knows, for just as character is the most potent factor in conduct so personality directs the acquisition and the management of knowledge.

Sooner or later the professional writer will turn into either a cathedral, a university, or a factory—or into a conglomerate of the three. If it be a cathedral, it is to be hoped that it will be warm with human life and alight with welcome for children, those who labor, and those whose lives need healing. If it be a university, let him see to it that instruction is vitalized by the throbbing life of today. If it be a factory, it will serve him well if he remembers that a house of big production need not be sordid, and that every cathedral and every university goes to the factory for much of its beauty and its utility.

As for the conglomerate—well, that is a difficult problem.

One of the writer's chief problems is to foster broad interests within himself and yet not allow these to prevent his absorption in one paramount interest. To hold the extensive in proportion to the intensive is the key of progress. The well balanced mind knows something of many things and all that can possibly be acquired of one thing.

It is not necessary to be an imitator in order to follow in the footsteps of one who has gone before. Let your imprint be your own.

The writer works not alone in the workshop but in every waking hour—and often when he sleeps. All his life is a preparation for—or a handicap to—expression.

The infinite pains that one takes to understand human life in its countless aspects often passes for, though it is more important than, talent. There is one surpassing land in which every writer may make endless journeys—the heart of man.

Many a slovenly mind is not completely aware of what it thinks. Some of us would be surprised to see our own selves as in a mirror.

H. C. S. Folks

"The Bulldogging Fool" by Harrison Conrad, Doney, Arizona, appeared in the March issue of Lariat Story Magazine.

Holland's Magazine (Dallas, Texas) in its November issue contained a short illustrated article by Harriett A. Moffitt, Dallas, Texas, entitled "A Memorial Grove Planted by Women".

Edmund Pugsley, Vancouver, B. C., had a story, "After Ten Years", in the January issue of Girl's World (Philadelphia), and another, "Sealed Disorders", in the January issue of The Railway Conductor (Cedar Rapids, Iowa).

Blanche C. Naylor, Oklahoma City, Okla., is the editor of Oklahoma Woman, a new publication for women.

George Woods Hicks, Springville, Calif., had a poem in the Christmas number of Mitchell Advocate (Ontario), entitled "Holy Night", and a poem, "Sky Pilot Man" in the December issue of Porterville Progress. On February 4 Mr. Hicks delivered an address upon the subject "The New Literature" before the Federation of Women's Clubs at Strathmore, Calif.

The Lariat Story Magazine for March contained a story by Frank Halverson, Pittsburgh, Pa., entitled "Ranger Jefferson Clay".

"The Telegram", a play by Elizabeth M. Cullis, Chicago, Ill., has just been published by Walter H. Baker Company, Boston.

Merle Thorpe, Washington, D. C., is the editor and publisher of The Nation's Business (Washington, D. C.), the organ of the United States Chamber of Commerce.

Chesla Sherlock, editor of Better Homes and Gardens (Des Moines, Iowa), is the author of "Homes of Famous Americans", Vol. II, published by the Meredith Publications (Des Moines).

Physical Culture for February contained an illustrated article entitled "I'm Full of Pep Because I Exercise", by Verona Bowes, Republican City, Nebr.

May Lightburne, San Antonio, Texas, is the author of "Nature and Art of the Bible", a book on the birds, flowers, poetry, etc., of the Bible, published by the Naylor Printing Company (San Antonio).

The leading article in Management (Chicago) for January is an interview with Herbert C Ellsworth, General Manager of the American Express Company, by Dirk P. DeYoung, Avenel, New Jersey. Mr. DeYoung is a frequent contributor of interview articles to Management.

"Reflections", a story by Gardner Boyd, Lake Worth, Fla., appeared in the December 26 issue of This Week in the Palm Beaches (West Palm Beach, Fla.).

The February issue of Cowboy Stories contained a story by Ralph Lee Cunningham, Wenatchee, Wash., entitled "When Old Jed Parker Remembered".

"Too Many Crooks" in the second February issue of Ace-High Magazine was by Edgar Daniel Kramer, Baltimore, Md.

Cora June Sheppard, Shiloh, N. J., is writing a series of Half Century Farmer Stories for a paper published in Salem, N. J.

Clark Belden, Hartford, Conn., in collaboration with Governor John H. Trumbull, is author of three articles which appeared recently in The Financial Digest (Hartford) as follows: "Connecticut Entirely Out of Debt" in the September issue, "Connecticut Balances Her Budget" in the October issue, and "Connecticut Must Meet Highway Crisis" in the January issue. Mr. Belden is also the author of an article which recently appeared in The Elks Magazine, entitled "A New Responsibility for Motorists". This article was reprinted in The Literary Digest for February 5, under the heading, "Legislation for Pedestrians".

Maud C. Jackson, Lawrence, Mass., is author of the following: in Kind Words (Nashville, Tenn.), "The Testing of Buff", and "Rebecca Scores a Touchdown"; in Home Friend (Kansas City), "Apple Pies", "Fate", "Homeland", and "Disillusionment", all poems; in Watchword (Dayton, Ohio), "Cows and Cabbages" an eight-chapter serial, "Pink Geranium", in Our Little Ones (Philadelphia), and "Brave Dora" in Sunday-School Times (Philadelphia).

Lilian Milner Graham, Ottawa, Canada, has had the following contributions in recent issues of Onward (Toronto): "Through Individual Finders", an article; "How the Reproduction of Engravings was Discovered", an article; "The Right Place", "Martin Dawson's Retirement", and "A Matter of Judgment", all stories.

Michael V. Simko, Bridgeport, Conn., during the past three months has had an article in The American Journal of Nursing, stories in The Sunday Companion, and Young Catholic Messenger (Dayton, Ohio), an article entitled "An Ulcer Goes Visiting" in the January issue of the Journal of the National Association of Chiropodists, and a serial entitled "Solitude Cabin" started in the February number of Manna (St. Nazianz, Wisconsin).

Eugene Cunningham, El Paso, Texas, is author of the following: "The Fore Peak Ladder" in Sea Stories, "Once a Ranger, Always a Ranger", in Frontier, "Hard Luck Lowery" in War Stories, "Cows in the Dark", in Frontier, and three installments of "Burned Brands", appearing in Lariat Story.

"The Red Necktie" by H. Bedford-Jones, Evansville, Ind., appeared in the January 5 issue of West (Garden City, N. Y.).

Frances Gorman Risser, Ardmore, Okla., had a story, "Fairies and Flowers", in the February issue of The Children's Comrade (St. Louis, Mo.). Mrs. Risser has also had several poems published recently as follows: "Four Friendly Minds", in the January issue of Storyland, "Black Treasure", in the November 10 issue of Short Stories, "Mile Stones", in the January issue of Young Israel (Cincinnati), "The Cloud Boat", in the October 10 issue of the Olive Leaf, and "Moon Fantasy", in the November issue of Poet's Scroll (Platter, Okla.).

George E. Clark, Brooklyn, N. Y., is the author of a capital short-story entitled "Fortitude", which appeared in the March issue of Breezy Stories.

The January issue of Countryside (Elgin, Ill.) contained a story entitled "The Wonderful Advertisement", by Saidee L. Slover. The same periodical had two poems by Mrs. Slover in the December 18th and January 15th issues.

The December issue of The Farmer's Wife (St. Paul, Minn.) contained "A Christmas Story" by Emma Frances Legge, Glendale, Calif.

Chester W. Colburn, North Weare, N. H., has had articles printed in recent issues of The Writer's Digest (Cincinnati), Kindergarten-Primary Magazine (Manistee, Mich.), Capper's Farmer (Topeka, Kansas), Junior Life (Cincinnati), Baptist Standard (Dallas), Youth's World (Philadelphia) and Judge.

Vicarious—Author: "So you like my story? What part do you particularly like?"

Miss Sally: "Oh, I think those quotations from Shakespeare are simply wonderful."—Poultry Item.

But It Isn't Contagious—There was said to be a plot against the production of a certain musical comedy. This must be the nearest a plot has ever got to a musical comedy.—London Opinion.

But Have You Seen Their Worst?—Son: "What's a genius, pop?"

Pop: "A genius is a man who can rewrite a traveling salesman's joke and get it accepted by The Ladies' Home Journal."—Cornell Widow.

Proof Positive—Poet: "Are you the man who cut my hair last time?"

Barber: "I don't think so, sir. I've only been here six months."—Gaiety.

Righto—Critic: "You'll never have your name inscribed in the Hall of Fame."

Author: "Maybe not, but I'd sooner have people asking why it isn't there than asking why it is."—Pathfinder.

Prompt Production—Playwright: "You received my play, of course? Will you produce it?"

Producer: "Why, yes! Here (to office-boy), dig down in the wastepaper-basket and produce Mr. McKay's play for him."—Answers.

You've Said It!—It is easier to court the muse than it is to get her publisher's consent.—Anon.

She Knew—Mrs. Cookstour, describing her travels in Switzerland, told how she had seen Lake Geneva and Lac Leman.

"But," said a hearer, "Lake Geneva and Lac Leman are synonymous."

"Oh, yes, I know," she replied, "but Lac Leman is the much more synonymous of the two."—The Hartford Agent.

Inspired Writing—The minister's little girl had been watching her father prepare his next Sunday morning sermon.

"Daddy," she asked, "does God tell you what to say when you write your sermon?"

"Why, yes, of course, dear."

She thought it over for a second, and then asked, "Then, daddy, why do you keep on scratching words out?"—Saturday Evening Post.

Poetic License

Here lies the remains of Willie Jones,
Died from eating cherry stones.
His name was Smith but we call him Jones,
So it will rhyme with cherry stones.
—White Mule.

Confessional?

Do right and fear no man.
Don't write and fear no woman.
—Anon.

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PRIZE CONTESTS

The League of American Penwomen, Baltimore Branch, announces its annual short-story contest for which it offers a prize of $25 for the best story submitted. The aim of the League is to foster the arts among women and with this in view each year it runs a short-story contest which is open to any woman resident of Maryland. Short stories must not exceed 5000 words. Only one story may be submitted by each contestant. No stories having been previously published or having received a prize or any recognition will be eligible. All manuscripts must be typewritten, and must bear neither the name nor the address of the author, which must be sent under same cover with manuscript in a sealed envelope containing return postage. Contest closes April 15, 1927. Address all manuscripts to Prize Committee, League of American Penwomen, Academy of Sciences, 105 West Franklin St., Baltimore, Md. All manuscripts remain the property of the owner. Prizes will be awarded by June 1, 1927, when name of successful contestant will be published.

Curtis Brown, Ltd., Literary Agents, announce that the first-novel prize competition which they are conducting on behalf of Pictorial Review and Dodd, Mead & Company has not yet been decided, but they hope to announce the winner within a short time.

The Social-Recreation Union, 510 Wellington Ave., Chicago, Ill., offers a prize of $50 for the best original stunt suitable for use in church centered recreation. Stunts may be humorous or serious, pantomime, playlet, musical or dramatic sketch. They may be for four or more players, and run from five to fifteen minutes. They should need little equipment and rehearsal. Contest closes April 15, 1927.

The Rosicrucian Fellowship, Oceanside, Calif., offers five prizes for the best manuscripts submitted as follows: (1) Mystical Stories and interesting Personal Experiences bringing out some phase of the occult teachings. (2) Philosophical Articles on mysticism, occultism, philosophy, and religion, either theoretical or practical. (3) Astrological Articles, both esoteric and exoteric. Practical applications of the science of Astrology. (4) Health Articles bringing out interesting scientific and occult facts about the human body. Also articles of a practical nature on the gaining and retaining of health. Will not accept articles on crystal gazing, mediumship, or other negative forms of psychic development. The first prize is $25, second prize $15, third prize $10, and fourth and fifth prizes $5.00 each. One year's subscription to "Rays from the Rose Cross" will be given for acceptable articles that do not win prizes. Manuscripts must contain not less than 2500 words, and should, if possible, be typewritten, and in double spacing. Write the words "Manuscript Competition" at the top of the first page; also

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name, address, and number of words. More than one manuscript may be submitted by the same writer. Manuscripts are accepted subject to the provision that the editor may make slight modifications, if necessary, to bring a story or article within the requirements of their philosophy. Contest closes May 1, 1927.

The American Historical Association, Washington, D. C., is offering this year the George Louis Beer Prize of $250 for the best work upon any phase of European International History since 1895. The competition is limited to citizens of the United States and to works that shall be submitted to the American Historical Association. A work may be submitted in either manuscript or print. Works must be submitted on or before April 1 of each year in order to be considered for the competition of that year. In the case of printed works the date of publication must fall within a period of two and a quarter years prior to April 1. The Herbert Baxter Adams prize of $200, which is also offered this year, is for a monograph based upon independent and original investigation in the history of the Eastern Hemisphere. The monograph may deal with any aspect or phase of that history. The monograph must conform to the accepted canons of historical research and criticism. A manuscript including text, notes, bibliography, appendices, etc.—must not exceed 100,000 words. Competition shall be limited to monographs written or published in the English language by writers of the Western Hemisphere. Monographs must be submitted on or before April 1 of the given year. In the case of a printed monograph the date of publication must fall within a period of two and a quarter years prior to April 1. A work submitted in competition for the Herbert Baxter Adams prize may at the same time, if its subject meets the requirements, be submitted for the George Louis Beer prize; but no work that shall have been so submitted for both prizes will be admitted to the competition for the Beer prize in any subsequent year. In making the awards, the committee in charge will consider not only research, accuracy and originality, but also clearness of expression, logical arrangement and general excellence of style. The prizes are designed especially to encourage those who have not published previously any considerable work or obtained an established reputation. Only works in the English language will receive consideration. Inquiries and manuscripts may be addressed to the Secretary of the American Historical Association, 1140 Woodward Bldg., Washington, D. C.

The Chattanooga Writers' Club, Chattanooga, Tenn., announces the following awards in the Elberta Clark Walker Memorial prize contest, which closed November 1, 1926. First prize of $20 to Miss Sarah Litsey, Louisville, Ky., for her poem, "Mountains"; second prize of $10 to Miss Elizabeth Cheatham, Athens, Ga., for her poem, "End of August".

Radio Digest, Chicago, Ill., awarded the following prizes in their recent contest for the best solutions to a story by Robert J. Casey, which ran serially last year in the Radio Digest: First prize of $250 to Mrs. H. L. Lentz, Salina, Kans., second prize of $100 to Clinton B. DeSoto, Owen, Wis., and seventeen third prizes of $10 each.

Georgia Historical Society, Savannah, Ga., has made awards as follows in the contest which closed October 1st: $50 to Mrs. Dolores Boisfeuillet Colquitt, Washington, D. C., for her historical article, "Peter Tondee the Carpenter"; $50 to John Pirie, Dallas, Texas, for his historical poem, "Chickamauga"; and $50 to Mrs. Georgia Stenger, New York, for her play, "The Cherokee Rose".

The Berkshire Music Colony, Inc., announces that the prize for 1926, for the best Sonata or Suite for Violin and Piano, has been awarded to Albert Huybrechts, Brussells, Belgium, who also won the Coolidge Prize in the competition of the Ojai Valley Festival last year. The prize winning composition was performed

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at the last Chamber Music Festival of the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., on October 7, 8, and 9, 1926.

The Montreal Branch of the Canadian Authors Association has awarded its prize of $50 for the best one-act play submitted last year, to T. M. Morrow, Montreal, Canada, for his play "The Blue Pitcher". There were also ten Honorable Mentions awarded.

The Johnny Appleseed Club, Waverley, Mo., awarded a prize of $5.00 for the best letter furthering the usefulness of the organization, to Mrs. Elizabeth Newell, Terre Haute, Indiana. Twenty-four states participated in the contest. The prize letter was printed in the Kansas City Packer on December 4th.

American Historical Association, Washington, D. C., announces that the Justin Winsor Prize of $200 for 1926 went to Dr. Lowell J. Ragatz, George Washington University, Washington, D. C., for his essay "Decline of the British West India, 1763-1833". Honorable Mention was given to Julius W. Pratt, University of Buffalo, Buffalo, N. Y., for his book, "Expansionists of 1812". The George Louis Beer Prize for 1926 was not awarded.

The National Board of Fire Underwriters, New York, announces with regret that the judges in the competition conducted last year for the best motion picture synopsis visualizing the story of fire insurance, have been unable to accept any of the manuscripts submitted.

The Drama, Chicago, Ill., announces that the judges did not deem any of the cover designs submitted in the Prize Poster Contest, which closed last May, worthy of a prize, and it was therefore decided to suspend decision for the present.

The Federation of Music Clubs of the District of Columbia announces with regret that in the opinion of the five judges in the contest for a poem for an official song for the District of Columbia, none was found suitable for the purpose, so the award was withheld.

The Harvard Advertising Awards for 1926 were presented as follows: O. C. Harn was awarded the gold medal for distinguished personal service to advertising, in recognition of his work as president of the Audit Bureau of Circulations; The Blackman Company, New York advertising agency and the Proctor & Gamble Company, jointly were awarded a $2000 cash prize and certificate for the national campaign of a specific product deemed most conspicuous for its planning and execution; Barton, Durstine & Osborn, Inc., New York advertising agency, in association with the General Electric Company, and Lord & Thomas and Logan, advertising agency, received the award for the national campaign of an institutional character deemed by the jury most conspicuous for its planning and execution; The Campbell-Ewald Company, Detroit advertising agency, was awarded $2000 and certificate for the most excellent campaign in cities or towns of over 100,000 population; The Rome Wire Company, Rome, N. Y., and Moser & Cotins, Utica advertising agency, jointly received the first award for the best campaign in industrial, trade or professional publications. Four awards of $1000 each and certificates were made for distinguished individual advertisements, as follows: A. W. Diller, of the Blackman Company, New York, for an advertisement entitled "They saw Europe on Dimes"; The Prudential Life Insurance Company of America, with recognition to E. Stanley Turnbull, artist, for an advertisement entitled "The Misery of an Old Man Is of Interest to Nobody"; The Federal Advertising Agency, Inc., New York, for an advertisement entitled "Visit this Next Door Normandy"; Calkins & Holden, Inc., New York advertising agency, for an advertisement on Snowdrift. Barton, Durstine & Osborn, Inc., received a cash prize of $2000 and certificate for the

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The New Church Trace Society, Philadelphia, Penna., announces that the prize of $100 for the most clearly written tract on the subject "Was Man Evolved from Animal?" was awarded to Rev. Frederic R. Crownfield, Cambridge, Mass. Honorable Mention was given to Rev. E. M. Lawrence Gould, Brooklyn, N. Y., and Miss Alice F. Spiers, Washington, D. C.

A prize of $25 and three Honorable Mentions will be awarded in the **Frances Scott Key Contest** for the best patriotic song not over 24 lines. Three poems may be entered, the same never to have been published nor to be offered for publication until close of contest. Copies of poems sent should be kept as no manuscripts will be returned. Poems sent must be unsigned but accompanied by a separate piece of paper containing name and address of contestant and title of poem. Closing date August 30, 1927. Address, Leacy Naylor Green-Leach, 110 Morningside Drive, New York City.

The following prize contests, alphabetically arranged, are still running. Full particulars have been given in previous issues, but details are repeated here.

Adventure, Spring and Macdougal Sts., New York, offers an annual prize of $100 for the best poem published by them during the year.

The American Arbitration Crusade, 114 East 31st St., New York, is conducting a campaign to arouse all peace-lovers to redoubled efforts to prevent war, and in order to stimulate interest the following prizes are offered: $100 for the best letter, editorial or article appearing in any publication having at least 5000 circulation; $100 for the best public demonstration or concerted endeavor for obligatory arbitration; $100 for the best slogan; $100 for the best cartoon; $100 for the best sermon. The main idea must be arbitration in each instance. All contests will close on July 4, 1927.

The American Magazine, 250 Park Ave., New York, offers a monthly prize contest for the best letters of not over 400 words on a given subject. Prizes are $30, $20 and $10. Subject changes each month. Contest closes the 20th of the month.

The American Rifleman, 1108 Woodward Bldg., Washington, D. C., offers a prize of $100 for the best hunting or shooting story received during the year, paying $10 for each story printed.

American School Citizenship League announces its World Essay Contest for 1926-27, which is open to students of all countries. Two sets of prizes, to be known as the Seabury Prizes, are offered for the best essays on one of the following subjects: Open to Students in Normal Schools and Teachers Colleges—"The Teacher an Agent of International Goodwill." Open to Seniors in Secondary Schools—"How the Youth of the World Can Promote International Goodwill." Prizes of $75, $50 and $25 will be given for the three best essays in each set. Each essay must be accompanied by a topical outline and a bibliography with brief notes on each book. Essays must not exceed 5000 words (a length of 3000 words is suggested as desirable). Manuscripts not easily legible will not be considered. The name of the writer must not appear on the essay, which should be accompanied by a letter giving the writer's name, school, and home address, and sent to Dr. Fannie Fern Andrews, 405 Marlborough St., Boston 17, Mass., not later than June 1, 1927. Information concerning literature on the essay subjects may be obtained from the Secretary of the League.

The Blue Book Magazine, 36 South State St., Chicago, Ill., offers five monthly prizes of $100 each for the best "actual fact" stories of true experiences in the

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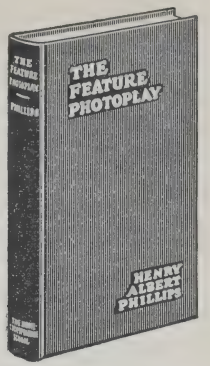

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following special fields—Adventure, Mystery, Business, Sport, Humor. Stories should not exceed 2000 words and should be shorter, if possible. Address contributions to True Experience Editor, The Blue Book Magazine.

Chautauqua Institution offers through Mr. C. C. Birchard, Boston music publisher, a prize of $1000 for the best religious cantata for adult mixed voices and piano accompaniment. The work must be approximately thirty minutes in length, and the text may be from any source not covered by copyright. If a new and unpublished text is used, the composer must present satisfactory evidence of his right to use the same. Manuscripts must be sent anonymously, accompanied by a sealed envelope containing marks of identification. Compositions submitted must not have been published or publicly performed. Competition closes April 1, 1927. All manuscripts must be sent to Prof. H. Augustine Smith, Boston University, 20 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.

The Chicago Trust Company offers annual prizes of $300 and $200 for the two best manuscripts on original research in business and finance. The competition is open to bank employes, and students of banking, commerce or law. In addition to these prizes, there is a triennial research prize of $2500 for an unpublished study, submitted in competition, which is considered to contain the greatest original contribution to knowledge and advancement in the field outlined. This award will be made in the autumn of 1927. Papers should be sent not later than June 1, 1927, and should be addressed to Professor Leverett S. Lyon, Professor of Economics, Robert Brookings Graduate School of Economics and Government, 1724 I Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

The Christian Century, 440 So. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill., is offering prizes of $50, $25, $15, and $10 for the best work appearing in their magazine for 1927.

The Crowell Publishing Company, as publishers of The Woman's Home Companion, and **The John Day Company, Inc.,** will award $50,000 in prizes for the two most interesting, well-written novels best adapted to serial and book publication. The Crowell Publishing Company will pay $20,000 for the winning novel written by a man, and a like sum for the winning novel written by a woman, for the first American serial rights. The John Day Company will pay $5000 for the United States and Canadian book rights of the winning novel written by a man, and a like sum for the winning novel written by a woman, as advance payment on account of royalties. A competitor may submit more than one manuscript, but each must be entered separately. All manuscripts submitted must be original unpublished works written in English. Translations will not be eligible. No manuscript containing less than 50,000 words should be submitted; preference will be given to manuscripts of full novel length. All manuscripts must be addressed to "Novel Competition," c/o The John Day Company, 25 West 45th St., New York City. A printed agreement, which will be sent on request, must be mailed in a sealed envelope marked "Novel Competition" at the same time the manuscript is submitted, together with sufficient postage for return of manuscript. Competition closes July 1, 1927.

The Drama League of America, in order to foster the American drama, to aid the American theatre, and to encourage the American playwright, has organized four national contests in playwriting, as follows: 1. College, Historical, One-Act. Only college students may compete. 2. Little Theatre, Experimental, One-Act. Anyone may compete. 3. Biblical, Non-Sectarian, Any Length. Anyone may compete. 4. All-American, Full-Length. Anyone may compete. All plays must be original and owned by the author, and must not previously have been produced or published professionally. The treat-

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ment may be in any manner—burlesque, farce, comedy, drama, melodrama, tragedy, or mystery. But neither material nor treatment may be offensive to good taste. One-act plays should require from twenty to forty minutes to perform; full-length plays, from two to two and one-half hours. Authors should send manuscripts to college, state center, or national headquarters without comment. The last day for handing in manuscripts is May 1, 1927. Entrants to the Biblical contest will send their manuscripts direct to Drama League of America, 59 East Van Buren St., Chicago, Ill.

The Echo, 1837 Champa St., Denver, Colo., announces four important awards: The Joseph Reed Award of $500 for short-stories used in The Echo; The Annual Campion Memorial Award of $1000 for fostering the pioneer spirit of the West; the Mrs. Venner Z. Reed Fund of $500 for the development of Art and Literature through The Echo; The Frank E. Kistler Award of $220 for the best Echo covers. All material printed in the magazine is automatically entered for the awards. All contributions should be sent to The Editors of The Echo, 1837 Champa St., Denver, Colo. Self-addressed, stamped envelopes should be enclosed, as no unavailable manuscripts or drawings will be returned unless postage is sent.

W. B. Foshay Company, Inc., Minneapolis, Minn., is conducting an advertising contest, the purpose of which is to gather original ideas, suited or readily adaptable to make their aims and activities well-known to the public. For such ideas, $2500, first prize; $1000, second prize; $500, third prize, and ten prizes of $100 each will be awarded. Every ad should carry the Foshay border and the Foshay signature, as well as the Foshay slogan—"All Your Money—All the Time —On Time". All copy must be centered on one dominant thought which covers their business of financing, controlling, and managing public utilities and industrials and the distribution of securities. All advertisements, books or folders must be original. The advertisements may be illustrated or not, according to the taste of the contestant. Send all advertisements to Contest Editor, W. B. Foshay Company, Foshay Bldg., 826 Second Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minn. Contestants are not limited to any number of entries. All contestants must have their entries reach W. B. Foshay Co. not later than April 30, 1927.

Hart, Schaffner & Marx, Chicago, offer annually prizes amounting to $2000 for the best studies in the economic field. The prizes are divided as follows: Class A—first prize, $1000; second prize, $500. Class B—first prize, $300; second prize, $200. Class A includes any resident of the United States or Canada, without restriction. Class B includes only those who, at the time papers are sent in, are undergraduates of any American college. Subjects for studies are suggested, but any other subjects may be chosen, if approved by the Committee. Manuscripts should be inscribed with an assumed name, the class in which they are presented, and accompanied by a sealed envelope giving the real name and address of the competitor, together with any degrees or distinctions already obtained. If competitor is in Class B, the sealed envelope should contain the name of the tributions in which he is studying. Contributions should be sent to J. Laurence Laughlin, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill., on or before June 1, 1927. Further particulars and a list of subjects already approved by the Committee may be obtained from Mr. Laughlin.

Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce is offering four prizes for the best authentic historical pageants submitted, portraying the history of Hot Springs dating from the arrival of the Spanish explorer, Ferdinand DeSoto, in 1541, to the present day. The pageant will be staged to celebrate the 100th birthday of Hot Springs National Park in 1932. The first prize consists of $1000 cash; second prize,

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The Independent Order Brith Sholom announces its second annual prize story contest for the best short stories of Jewish interest. A first prize of $75; a second prize of $50; a third prize of $40; and a fourth prize of $25 will be given. In addition, $10 will be paid to each other story accepted and used. The manuscripts should not be less than 2500 words nor more than 3500 words. Stories must be signed by an assumed name. Enclosed with submissions must be a sealed envelope, on the outside of which there must be written the assumed name of the contestant, and enclosed in the envelope a paper containing (a) name of contestant, (b) address, (c) age. All contributions must reach Independent Order Brith Sholom, 506 Pine St., Philadelphia, Penn., not later than April 20, 1927.

The Infantry Journal, Washington, D. C., will award a prize of $1500 for the best music for "The Infantry Song". The object of the contest is to produce original music, in march time, that will be suitable for a song (with chorus) for the Infantry. The music should be simple, catchy and capable of being learned readily by the rank and file, and at the same time stirring and full of pep, but free from jazz. There is no limit on the number of entries submitted by any contestant. Citizens of the United States, or those who have declared their intentions to become citizens, are eligible. Manuscripts must be legibly written. The melody must be arranged for piano or for band. Words suggested for the song may accompany the music. Contestants will be required to subscribe to all conditions of the contest on approved form, furnished upon request by the Infantry Journal, Infantry Bldg., Washington, D. C., before entry or entries will be accepted. The usual rules concerning nom de plume will be adhered to. Contest closes at noon, July 1, 1927.

Life Cartoon Comedies, 598 Madison Ave., New York, will pay $50 for each scenario or idea they can use for their comedies, now being released by Educational Film Exchange, Inc. Each of these comedies is five hundred feet (about half a reel) in length, and is crammed with as many humorous ideas, or "gags", as can possibly be included in that limited space. Ideas do not have to be in scenario form, nor is it even necessary to work out a complete story. They will pay full rates for one humorous idea—one "gag" —that they can use. Manuscripts should not exceed five hundred words in length.

The New York Committee on Publicity Methods in Social Work announces a first prize of $300, a second prize of $150 and a third prize of $50 given by Arthur W. Page, membership chairman of the New York Charity Organization Society, for the best short stories submitted. Stories may be entered by any individual or organization. Every story submitted must be an original work and shall not have been previously published. Manuscripts must not be more than 5000 words in length. Manuscript must not be signed with the real name of the author, but with a pen name. Neither the author's address nor any other indication of identity may appear on the wrapper or the manuscript. Accompanying each manuscript shall be a sealed envelope bearing on the outside the title of the story and the pen name of the author. The envelope shall contain an enclosure bearing the title of the story submitted, both the real and pen name, and the address of the author. Manuscripts should be addressed to Mrs. Gertrude Springer, Short Story Contest Committee, 151 Fifth Ave., New York City. Manuscripts must be received not later than noon of April 12, 1927.

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The Stanford Illustrated Review, an alumni magazine published at Stanford University, Calif., offers each month a cash prize of $25 for the most interesting article, of 1000 to 1500 words, on any subject having to do with Stanford University, or one of her alumni.

True Story Magazine, 1926 Broadway, New York, is offering $10, $5 and $3 each month for the best letters stating why readers do or do not like the different features in each month's issue, and offering suggestions for improvement. Contest closes the 15th of each month. Address the Editor.

The United Daughters of the Confederacy is offering the Mrs. Simon Baruch University Prize of $1000, to be awarded biennially, for the purpose of encouraging research in the history of the South, particularly in the Confederate period. The competition is limited to undergraduates and graduate students of universities and standard colleges in the United States and those who have been students in such institutions within the preceding three years. The prize will be awarded for an unpublished monograph or essay of high merit in the field of Southern history, preferably in or near the period of the Confederacy or bearing on the causes that led to the War Between the States. If no essay of high merit shall be submitted in any competition the prize will not be awarded for that year. It is expected that essays will comprise not less than 10,000 words and it is preferred that they be of considerably greater length. Essays in the first competition must be sent before September 1, 1927, to Mrs. Arthur H. Jennings, Chairman, 2200 Rivermont Ave., Lynchburg, Va.

The Witter Bynner Undergraduate Poetry Prize of $150 for the best 200 lines of poetry is again being offered by Mr. Bynner under the auspices of the Palms. Only undergraduates in an American college or university may compete. A single poem or a group of poems may be entered, but only 200 lines will be considered. Poems previously published elsewhere than in college magazines will not be eligible in the contest. The chosen poem will be published in Palms. The manuscripts must be typewritten in triplicate, and each sheet must bear the name and address of the contestant, together with his college. All entries must be mailed by March 31, 1927, to Witter Bynner, Box 1061, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The Woodrow Wilson Foundation announces a special donation by which it offers two Woodrow Wilson Awards of $25,000 each to the young men and young women of America for the two best articles of 2500 words on "What Woodrow Wilson Means to Me". The article is to be strictly confined to an exposition of Mr. Wilson's ideals and principles and what they mean to the writer. The Awards are available to any resident of the United States who has reached his or her twentieth birthday, and who has not passed his or her thirty-fifth birthday. An article may be submitted by an individual or jointly by a group or organization either existent or specially formed, provided the age limit of members is strictly observed. Such an article must be submitted in the name of the group or organization. The total num-

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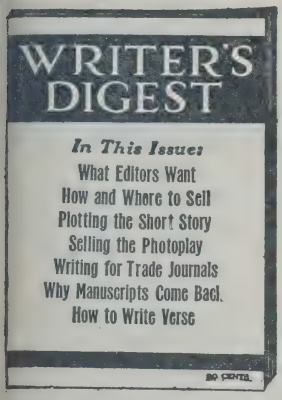

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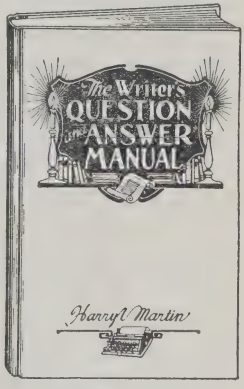

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Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn., publishes a Yale Series of Younger Poets, which is open to writers of American citizenship, who are under thirty years of age and have not previously published a volume of verse. Manuscripts for this competition are due May 1st and November 1st in each year. The best manuscript submitted in each competition is, if recommended by the Editor, published at the expense of the Yale University Press, the author receiving the usual 10% royalty on all copies sold in the United States. It is permissible to include poems previously published in periodicals or newspapers, if the consent of such journals is given for such publication. Contestants should address manuscripts and correspondence to the Editor, Yale Series of Younger Poets, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn.

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MISCELLANEOUS

Social Forces, Mt. Royal and Guilford Aves., Baltimore, Md. Quarterly; 50c; $4.00. Editor, Howard W. Odum, Chapel Hill, N. C. Use articles on social research and interpretation ranging from 1500 to 8000 words.

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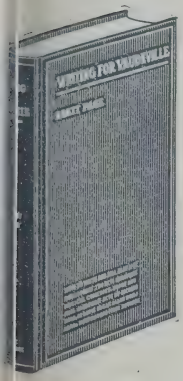

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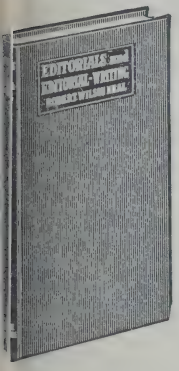

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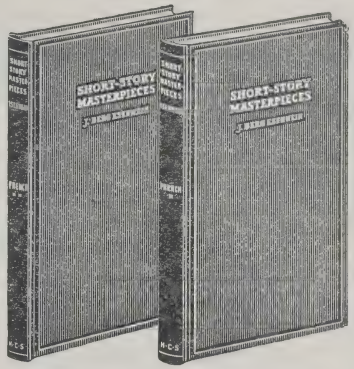

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MAY, 1927

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MAY, 1927 Volumne XXIX, No. 5

The Writer's Monthly

Photoplay Criticism

Epes W. Sargent

The Past Master of Constructive Photoplay Critics Here Writes Not Only Wisely but Most Helpfully—and with Absolute Knowledge

DOUBTLESS an article in a recent issue of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY was correct in saying that there is an opening for film critics, though we trade-paper editors are apt to feel that there is too darned much criticism as there is.

Speaking seriously, there is an opening for young men and women who have judgment, sympathy and appreciation. It is relatively easy to acquire the required experience, and no vast background is required, since the art is so young; and there is a fine opportunity to connect with what might be termed "a rapidly growing concern."

We who wrote the earliest film criticisms, back in 1896, are pretty much in the class with the critics who declared that "Abie's Irish Rose" did not stand a ghost of a show. None of us realized that here was a new art. We saw only an amusement curiosity. None of us gave the pictures more than a year to live as an amusement attraction—and this, thirty years ago! Even now we are still on the rim of what eventually will be the cinema, but there actually is a fine chance for earnest young people to make a start and grow with the business. Perhaps a few hints from an old-timer will help along.

I am no longer a staff critic, but I cover one or two of the Broadway showings each week because our single staff-man cannot cover them all, and there is not enough work for two; so I've kept my hand in it, though I am no longer so close to the job that I have no perspective.

In the first place, if you are looking for a berth that will be a lot of fun, keep off. You may enjoy going

to the Capitol or the Palace or whatever your local house may be called; you may be so regular that you miss practically no shows; but don't get the idea that being a critic is getting the same fun and being paid for it. If you really are going to criticize, you'll find it is just as much of a job as laying bricks or driving a truck.

Going to the pictures for amusement and going as a matter of business are two entirely different matters. It is a pleasant business, perhaps, but when you have to *watch* a picture it is a lot different from just looking at it. There is a certain nervous tension, and eventually you will reach the point where you will lose the illusion and see only the mechanics. If you keep at it long enough it is going to ruin the pictures as mere amusement.

But in return you'll get a professional interest that will, or should, prove to be a partial recompense. To me a picture is a lot of people working against backgrounds. Though I can appreciate good work, I no longer get the illusion; just as a magician no longer mystifies me because I know how he does his tricks. My interest lies in how well he does them.

Whether this will repay you for what you lose will depend entirely upon your mental make-up. If you get so that you hate the sight of a picture, give up, for you'll never be a critic. You may be able to write what you call criticisms, but you will not be a real critic.

That is one of the troubles right now: we have too many so-called critics who are merely literary show-offs. They are out of step with the business at which they earn their living, and their work is shallow; it is without understanding and lacking utterly in substance.

As I have intimated, you will need less background as a film critic than as a critic of the spoken drama because the art is yet so young that it lacks traditions. If you can remember back five years, you probably have as much knowledge as the average critic, and much more than many. Moreover, the screen has not yet a highly developed literary technique. It is infinitely more difficult to judge the merits of a spoken drama than to appraise the value of a film story.

All the delicate shades of literary composition are still lacking in the cinema; at best, we are only just reaching the point of artistic expression. It is still easier to appraise the visual action than the spoken word. Pictures are still made for the masses, obvious, a bit hackneyed. We have not as yet developed screen Shakespeares. The man or woman of ordinary intelligence can still appraise the generality of photoplays as well as the highly trained dramatic observer can. Often the former will write a better criticism, since the old-time dramatic man cannot fully purge his mind of the stage tradition. No amount of clever pantomime can make good to him the lack of spoken dialogue. The novice has at least an open mind.

The first thing the would-be

critic should learn is that criticism does not necessarily mean faultfinding. Walter Storey, of the old Board of Censors, put it neatly one morning while I was waiting to shove a can of film under the rubber stamp of approval. "It's easy enough to get censors," he complained. "The trouble is to get people who won't censor."

Properly, criticism is an appraisal. It is no confession of weakness to praise, though it is difficult to persuade many writers of this fact. The trouble is that the average reader responds more readily to faultfinding than to praise. There is more kick to the heavy hammer-strokes than to appreciation. Even editors seem to feel this way about it, and it is perhaps only natural to seek editorial approval.

There is nothing more futile than adverse criticism of a film. In the first place, the chances are that the players commented upon may never hear your comments. If they do, it is not possible to amend a fault; at least in that picture. Once the celluloid record is made, it is final. There can be no ten o'clock next-morning rehearsal to correct the faults of the performance of the night before. It sometimes happens that dramatic players profit by intelligent criticism, but film actors are in a sense helpless: they are on record for all time.

For this reason the best form of criticism is the one which tells the reader about the play rather than much about the playing. The former is what the readers chiefly want to know. Give them the impression of the play as a whole. Treat of the playing without going too deeply into detail. Give them the material on which they may base their own decision as to whether to go or to stay at home.

And remember that poor acting may not be the player's fault. Only the other day, in one of the private projection rooms, one of our best-liked women players fairly chewed up the scenery in an effort to carry out the director's idea as to how the scene should be played. He was an ignoramus who should never have been trusted with a megaphone. The art of the actress was perfect, but she had hired out for the production, and like a good trouper she played the miserable thing through. Some of the critics went back and wrote savage regrets that a once capable actress should have fallen so low. An intelligent criticism read: "John Doe made a terrible mess of the direction. He seems to lack all sense of tempo, and overplayed every strong scene."

If a player habitually overacts, no matter who does the directing, then you are reasonably safe in pronouncing that player poor. But if a former capable artist suddenly goes over to the school of 10-20-30 melodrama, do not blame the player. Blame the director. It's his fault. You can say that certain players are poorly directed or badly cast if they do not run true to form, but give the director the praise or the blame.

Under the current system of production the director is all-powerful. The player does the scene as the director instructs,—often not knowing what the scene is all about, for he may not know the story of the play.

If the player is better than usual, it is the director. If he is worse, it is the director. If the actor plays true to form, it is still more the director than the player. It follows, then, that the director is of prime importance. You will need to know the directors and their methods to be able to judge the acting of the players.

In sizing up a play, consider first the story. Is it interesting? Is it well told? Does it fully convey the idea the author is striving to express? Does it make the proper appeal to your emotions? If the answers are in the affirmative, then it is a good story.

But if you have to put down a string of negatives, don't be in too much of a hurry to take the hide off the unfortunate author. Perhaps it is not his fault. He may have written a brilliant play. What he writes seldom gets over to the screen. The author writes the story. This story is made into a "screen version" by someone in the studio. In other words, someone supposed to be experienced and capable in this line translates the author's fiction into the language of the studio. This person may have a lot of ideas that are wholly at variance with the ideas of the author. One of these ideas is pretty sure to be that the story will not get over to the screen until the studio writer has "fixed it up."

The director, the supervising director, the art director, the technical director, and from two to twenty others, all take a crack at the script in this stage, and they all have a lot of ideas as to how things should be done.

Then the scenarist takes this amended screen version, with all the changes, and strives to make the continuity, or working script. And perhaps the director changes even that completely.

Don't be in too much of a hurry to announce that "the story by Richard Roe is lamentably weak and wholly lacking in originality." The more originality poor Richard has shown the less likely he is to get it over to the screen in his original form. In time you'll get to know the peculiarities of the studio staffs and perhaps can tell more clearly who is to blame. On the other hand, of course, it often happens that a poor original is much improved in its journey from the script to the screen. If the story is from a known source, you can determine what has been added and what removed, but it seldom is wise to hang it all on the poor author. He may feel worse about it than you do.

Anyhow, you decide that the story on the screen is good or poor. Now comes the direction. You'll get to know the directors. You can tell in time about how much is the director's fault and how much the player's.

But there is something more

than acting, to engage the director. It is he who gives character to the production. The finished story is more his product than the author's, and in time you will sense his style and be able to tell whether he has done work that is up to his usual standard or has fallen below his average. In other words, he either has given charm to the story or he has failed.

Given the same script, no two men will give it precisely the same interpretation, any more than any two pianists give precisely the same rendition to a musical composition.

More than that, one director may be good in certain styles of plays and poor in others, just as one pianist may play Chopin divinely and fail to interpret Rubinstein.

It is the director's work which replaces the "style" in literary composition. The author contributes only a plot. The director does the telling, and he may excel in light comedy and be a very sad person in heavy drama. So you have to know the established directors and guess at the rest. More than that, you will need to be able to know whether the director has made the actors, or the actors have made the director. And you may be in the game for ten years and still be unable to hit it right more than seven or eight times out of ten.

Because, even after the director gets through, there are still factors to be considered, notably the editor, the Big Boss and the state censors. The director may have made a wonderful picture, and have his work spoiled by a poor assembly of the scenes, for even after a picture has been made some idiot may get the idea that changing around will help. Perhaps the Big Boss thinks that his expensive woman star is not given sufficient prominence. He may re-cut the picture to play her up. It will spoil the evenness of the direction, but her name is largest on the billboards. And even after the picture comes from the studio an artistic production, some fat headed politician on a state board may utterly ruin the product in his State.

But even that isn't all. You must consider the photoplay. Lately we have had something new. The first of the big German pictures brought a lot of trick camera work. At first it was known as camera tricks, then "camera angles", but today you speak of the "cinematics."

If the photographer makes his negative from a position nearly level with the average eye, or perhaps slightly above, that's "straight shooting." If he hangs by his knees from the rafters and aims his camera straight down, or shoots up through a glass plate in the floor, that's "cinematics." If he makes seven or eight pictures on one film, that's "cinematics." The idea is that since camera work is a new art, it should speak a language of its own. As a result, we get all sorts of photographic freaks.

Sometimes the work is very effective. Sometimes it is quite the reverse. If it tells an idea better than straight shooting, then

it is good cinematics. If it overshadows the telling of the story, it is poor, no matter how novel the idea may be.

And all of this works down to about this formula:

Is the story interesting?

Is it well told?

Is it well directed?

Is it well played?

Is the photography good?

Answer those questions effectively and you will have written a pretty fair criticism.

But know what good photography is, and do not stray to the worship of false cinematic gods. If a picture is blurred and fuzzy, don't be in too much of a hurry to say that the photography is poor. Wait until the printed titles flash on the screen. If they are fuzzy, too, it is reasonable to assume that the photography is all right, but the projector is out of focus. If the titles are clear and the scenes are fuzzy, then you can cuss the cameraman. But remember that a projector can get in and out of focus while it is running, and don't judge a scene by the main title alone. Watch each individual title, if you need a check-up.

For that matter, good photography does not always mean the ultimate in sharp definition. A picture, particularly a landscape, may be much better in soft focus. Often the lighting is far more important than you realize. A picture is merely a matter of contrasting light and shade. The cameraman may be an artist in shadows and yet seem to be shooting straight. Some of these scenes you admire so greatly may not be straight shooting, but the lighting may be controlled by a number of reflectors which strengthen the light in certain spots.

Often the cameraman will materially help to save a picture. Be willing to give him credit when he does.

Probably when you first start in to work you will find it difficult to decide just what you think. You may require a little time to let your ideas get settled. In that case it is a good plan to write out your ideas as soon as possible, and then let the story lie until the last minute, when you may find material changes desirable. But get it down on paper as soon as you can, and presently you will come definitely to know precisely what you want to say.

If there were a typewriter at the head of the aisle, I could sit right down and write the same story I would write the next morning, or a couple of days later. After thirty-five years of critical work I can do that; but many have to sit down and think before they can write out their ideas. If you must, do so, but the immediate writing out will be a greater help to quick and correct decisions than you can realize until you have tried it. And until you can form rapid and accurate opinions, criticism is going to be hard work.

Don't try to be too learned and technical, if you are writing for a newspaper. Newspaper readers do not want to be bored with heavy technical articles. They want to

know if the show is worth seeing or whether it would be better to save the quarter the admission represents. You can say that a story is low grade, but if it will entertain, don't be afraid to say that, too. Don't keep harping about Art. Learn to size up the audience's value of the picture. That's what you are hired for. Don't fill your story full of remarks about distant shots and closeups, back lighting, glass backings, and all the rest of the jargon. Keep your stuff simple and readable, and perhaps the editor will let you take a special column on Saturday or Sunday to show off your knowledge; but if you want to build up a following, be simple and understandable to the uninitiated.

And don't get the idea that you are framing public opinion. You can't. Recently a picture reached Broadway that the critics fairly slobbered over. "Wonderful" was about the mildest adjective they used, and one enthusiast wanted to know why it was put into weekly-change house when it could run the season out.

As a matter of fact, it had been scheduled for a two-week run, but on Wednesday it was "pulled." The notices were magnificent, but Tom Smith told Bill Jones that it was "a piece of cheese", and Bill and all his friends stayed away. Opening to a packed house, business was down twenty percent by Monday, and off forty percent on Wednesday.

People will read your criticisms, but they are guided more by what others tell them.

Don't get "the swelled head" just because the paper will print your opinion. Write common-sense appraisals rather than fancy criticisms, and you'll have the crowd with you and be of the crowd. Your friends may praise your fine writing, but even they will have no real respect for your opinion if you shoot too high.

And lastly—DON'T LET THEM "KID" YOU. If you get a nice letter from Susie Silversheet thanking you for your fine comments on her latest play and conveying the suggestion that she's worried sick until she finds out what you think, don't puff up. I'll admit I used to, thirty years ago, but today those letters go straight into the wastebasket. They've been headed in that general direction for the last twenty five years.

The stars of the stage and screen are all alike, only the screen has the system more highly developed.

You take the old man's word for it that Susie never saw your criticism. Probably the local theatre manager sent the clip to the exchange, the exchange sent it to the home office, the home office sent it to the studio, and some girl typed out a form letter and signed it with a rubber stamp that looks precisely like a pen signature. Susie doesn't know and she doesn't give a darn. So don't give an extra nice notice to Susie on her next play just because she wrote you.

You just tell what you and the rest of the audience thought.

Then you'll be a critic.

Authorship Through the Press

Errol Hunt Derby

Another Aspect of a Moot Question Constantly Being Discussed by Newspaper Folk

WRITING, many have found out, is more arduous in its learning than perhaps anything they have ever tackled.

It is not strange. The presentation of graphic, written work, which can be easily read—and which will be read—is a process that requires more constant practice than anything else. Of those who write, some achieve their goal suddenly—"born to it", as it is sometimes expressed. Others arrive only after hours and years of constant practice and development. There is, in short, but one way to learn to write—and that is to write.

This opens up the much-agitated question of whether or not authorship may be begun by writing for the press or whether or not a preliminary course in newspaper work is the utopia to a "by-line" in any one of the hundreds of magazines in the country.

There are the glittering successes in the world of authorship—gained after an apprenticeship of hard, grinding years near the smell of printer's ink. There are as many and really many more, distinct failures—those who are still sweating away, chasing rumors, unearthing "tips", gathering facts of real estate, court, criminal cases, and pounding out the stories found. Day in and day out they toil—their hopes and ambitions chilled by the endless stream of assignments and "beats" that must be covered to garner advertising in our newspapers with the necessary embellishment of printed words.

It is difficult for any newspaper worker, laboring with words all day, to go home at night and attempt that original creative writing which is so vital to successful free-lance or assignment authorship. Yet it can be done, is being done, successfully.

The newspaper worker comes into contact with life in all of its beauty as well as all its repugnancy. The perspective gained cannot but be broadening. It is probable that the aspiring writer has gone into the newspaper office very young, and if such be the case his development is more swift—that is, in his attitude toward living as a whole—than if he engaged in almost any other occupation.

I am a strong believer in the journalistic writing style and training for the development of high-school English—a viewpoint which educators, too, are beginning to express. Professor H. F. Har-

rington, director of the Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University has felt the call of this need and is now writing a textbook for high-school use which should be a strong factor in the development of English composition.

Borah's "News Writing" is being used in a few high schools where something else besides the usual, routine English composition has been found essential.

"I should like, however, to use any influence I have in inducing high schools to offer courses in journalism when the schools are of sufficient size that such an elective course may be given," the director of English in the Department of Education, Pennsylvania, Dr. Orton Lowe, recently wrote to me, when discussing some high-school journalistic work in which I am engaged on the side. "A journalistic course affords by far the best opportunity for learning to write that can be found in high-school composition work," he added.

I cite this merely to show that educators and school authorities are beginning to realize the value of newspaper writing and style as essential before the college era. And it is not so many years ago that similar courses were foreign to university curriculums. When others, engaged in high-school grade work, come to a similar realization of Dr. Harrington and Dr. Lowe, and more schools offer such work, we city editors will not do nearly so much cussing at the labors of green reporters, recently graduated from high schools and anxious to turn the town upside down.

The natural reaction, of course, will be that general writing will show a marked improvement. Whether or not the journalistic experience will play the part it does today may be another question then. Such a development, however, is far in the future. Most English teachers regard newspaper writing as almost suicidal to style, to freshness and to character delineation. Any edition of any newspaper, however, which has a breath of creative genius guiding it, can disprove such a contention. Should it seriously enter into a discussion of this present subject, I would elucidate further. Perhaps, one of these days, I can elaborate on what I have in mind on this particular point, for it is an interesting subject in itself.

There are Tom, Dick and Harry, Eleanor, Bess and Mae—and the reporter while writing about them learns about them. If he "falls to", he soon learns to think. When he begins to assimilate he realizes that all life is not a siesta on the half-shell—that there is something deeper, finer, more essential. Thus as he delves he grows, and this rich fund of acting, thinking acroamatism trains him for more masterful writing which he may want to turn out later.

The paramount fault generally attributed to the news-room training for authorship is in the haste with which material is prepared. Such writing is turned out amid the din of the typewriters of other reporters; the clanging of tele-

phone bells; incessant clattering of telegraph and news-printer machines and the rumble of the mechanical departments of the organization. Yet some of the scintillating examples of writing are to be found in the columns of our newspapers, "batted out" under the pressure of time. That such writing is recognized is proved by the annual award of the Pulitzer prizes, several of them going to the best examples of a reporter's work—Sinclair Lewis' hallucination regarding the Pulitzer awards to the contrary notwithstanding.

In my own newspaper office there are several reporters who have the "literary bug". Some are attempting short-stories; others, feature articles; more, trade-press correspondence and features which will bring in checks to aid the monthly stipend. All are engrossed because of the similarity of their hopes and the mutual advantages entailed when several attempt something in the writing profession outside their own immediate sphere.

There have been a few scattered successes among us. But with every failure to market, we have learned. Some of those still attempting to "break into the magazines" have been doing so for years; others recently have undertaken that Napoleonic effort. Consider, then, the disadvantage which one unfamiliar with prolific writing, except for his personal enjoyment, is under. Personally, I know that had I not had several years, and presumably many more to go, in the work of the daily press, the attractiveness of other fields of writing would not be nearly so inviting as they seem now.

There is a certain style, a flavor, a ruggedness of expression, a variety of appeal, which can be woven into every separate news-room piece of copy. The gamut of life's ups and downs, the contacts with experience—in fact, the daily expression of the news—afford multitudinous opportunities for the reporter to twist his fancy in his writing of the story. From what he has learned from the facts gathered he can determine from what angle his account may best be presented. Every item which he has must pass through this mental reaction, and therein lies a training.

Should the approach of the reporter not strike the fancy of the "desk" as being so brilliant, the erring one will be told. An efficient city, news or desk editor, with a few words and a few deletions, with probably a suggestion or two as to form and style, can save a trite offering and train a green reporter to make a veritable classic from his jargon. I have seen them do it; have had them do it for me.

This cutting, embellishment and blue-penciling of the news-room desk which the youthful reporter resents with all that is generally resentful, in time produces the writers we find on the news-staffs of America, and some of them, eventually, in the magazines.

Length

Archie Joscelyn

The Length of a Story Involves More than the Number of Words It Contains

THE matter of story-length is naturally one of interest to all writers. A glance at a representative list of papers and magazines using articles and fiction will disclose a very wide variance. There is a place somewhere (if the material be good enough) for stuff of any length, from a dozen words up to a quarter of a million. But writing anything on that general assumption is worse than shooting at a bullseye with a shotgun, in the hope that one shot will land true.

Most magazines pay according to the number of words, and in some instances the author is tempted to add several words here and there throughout the story in the expectation that the manuscript will bring more money. Or else he may feel that he has a good plot, and that it would stand a better chance of selling to a big magazine if it were long enough to fit their length—for many magazines, such as the Saturday Evening Post and Cosmopolitan, seldom ever use anything under 5,000 words, and generally 7,000 or so is nearer their minimum for full-length material.

Padding, perhaps, is frequently done innocently, yet with a canny eye to building the story up to the greatest length that it will bear. In some cases this is worthwhile, for an occasional writer has the fault of sketching his story, so that it is really no more than a glorified skeleton, and conscious padding will merely put some of the needed meat on the bones—or on the plot. However, this legitimate —and really desirable—process should be regarded as building up rather than padding, for padding is essentially an external process.

It is probably a tendency of most beginners to heed the cry for "action, plot and more action", and then to cram their stories so full of swift action that there is nothing else in them. The reader has no chance to recover from one swift thrust of action before another thrust catches him in the midriff. The real story-value of the action is crowded out, choked like a vegetable in a weedy garden.

This same writer generally learns, in time, that the amount of plot which he formerly used in one story will, if judiciously divided, furnish enough swift and thrilling material for a dozen good stories of equal length, and that they will be much better than the single crowded story was, because

they are stories in the real sense of the word.

Other writers, both new and old, are troubled in the opposite way—with a thin plot and the tendency to stretch it, pad it in every way possible. They are like a public speaker who tries to tell a story, and so smothers it in words that the audience becomes bored and unable to follow the real story. An interesting yarn loses all point under such treatment.

Yet writers who have wrestled with the problem of length, especially the matter of building up a story to the desired length, are often puzzled. If they have a natural tendency to use either too few or too many words, this can be overcome by constant writing, careful rewriting, and occasional criticism from a competent critic. This, however, takes care of only the expression of the story. There remains the question of plot-length in relation to story-length.

If their stories, even when built properly as to number of words for the material, persist in being too short or too long, that too can be largely overcome. A thin plot can be built up in nine cases out of ten, and profitably. The main reason for so many thin plots is that their authors are too easily satisfied, or too lazy to work and rework.

Many authors follow too closely the old idea of plot—that it must lead straght up to a dramatic incident, and close as soon as possible thereafter. They do not believe in adding any other material. They fail to see the big idea of plot—which is summed up accurately in the letters which spell the word. More counter-plot can be profitably added. Instead of using the climax as the final one, it may well be used, in many cases, as the first one. After that, add others.

This is not an easy task, of course, but it is the way to become a plot-builder. Many writers seek about for the next logical step, or the natural solution of a situation. Their stories show it. In one respect, the logical is exactly the thing to avoid. Have something happen that you haven't thought about, that by all the rules of the game should not happen. Then make it fit, and out of it build something interesting.

For the over-long plot, which is too filled with action, shave off that which is not vitally necessary—or, if it will not stand that, tell the story in the number of words needed. If it is too long for a short story, treat it as a novelette or a serial.

Writers frequently make the mistake of giving a story the wrong treatment. Some excellent stories are all but spoiled by putting them in the wrong form. Some short-stories deserve to be told in the form of novelettes, and vice versa.

It is well to aim for a definite magazine, or class of magazines, using a general length. The story written hap-hazard may sell to some magazine, but it will sell much better if aimed definitely at a target. Practice, they say, makes perfect. And it is astonishing how,

if a definite plot and a definite length is kept in mind, one may acquire the knack of fitting the plot into the length, so that there shall be no extra words, nor yet any words lacking. And one can in time learn to do this so that the story could go to a magazine wanting 3,500 words, or to one wanting 5,000. It is shaped, really, in the mind, while being written.

The writer who is thinking chiefly of the size of the check will do well to forget length, instead of remembering it. While many papers pay according to length in words, they generally have a varying rate. Editors as a class insist that they prefer the shorter stuff. True, shorter stories are rare in their columns, even though many writers send them in. One gleans the idea that, after all, they prefer the longer ones—else why do they use them so consistently?

But there is usually a reason. Most writers cannot compass a superior plot in the shorter lengths, and most editors do not want short and flabby plots. So they buy the story that contains the desirable plot, even if it is longer than they like.

But if the story is told in a shorter length, while it will not bring pay for as many words, the editor is usually fair—and pays a higher rate per word. So the idea nets practically as much in the end, and considerably less time and effort are needed to win the money. The editor is paying for quality, and really most editors do prefer to pay for quality rather than quantity, even if it does cost more money to fill up their pages. For readers also prefer quality.

Length, then, is not an essential to be considered, except when it comes to selling; certainly in writing, except in the ways I have noted. All lengths if sufficiently well done, find a welcome somewhere. To the extent that stories of a certain type must range within a certain length, the matter needs consideration in plot-building. But length should aways be handled when building the plot, rather than when writing the story.

Sticking To It

The author who gives up after one rejection, or two, or ten, is unworthy of the name. There is no royal road to authorship. It is fight, fight and keep on fighting to the end. And that is as it should be. Art is worth nothing without the fight to win, without the willingness to die fighting. He who by some stroke of fortune reaches a point where fighting is unnecessary soon drops out of the race.—ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE.

Writing for Young People

Helen Sherman Griffith

III.—THE ADOLESCENT STORY

The Final Paper of an Informing Series on a Subject that More and More Engages the Notice of Writers

THE WORD "adolescent" has always been in the dictionary, but it is only lately, when medical terms have been freed along with everything else in our modern life, that it has been widely used publicly.

Not that there is anything in its meaning to offend. The Century dictionary definition of adolescence is:—"the act of growing, the age between infancy and maturity;..... applied almost exclusively to the young of the human race." But, used as it sometimes is, the word is made to sound as if its complement-word should be "sex".

Aren't you tired of that poor little, maltreated word, sex? Once a large party of us, ranging in age from six to—well, almost sixty—were playing the old-fashioned game of "Twenty Questions". The youngest member present listened to the questions propounded and as her own turn drew near solemnly challenged the questioner: "There's no use asking me that question; I don't know anything about male and female." Blessed ignorance!

Another over-worked term is "moron." So much has been said and written, both in scientific and in social circles, about morons that one hesitates before the term "juvenile", lest the careless reader confuse its meaning with that of moron. We all used to admire those of our friends who had kept the spirit of youth, to laud the man who still had "the boy in him". Do you remember Peter Pan, the little boy who wouldn't grow up? Wasn't he an adorable youngster? What would happen if Barrie wrote about him now? I'm very much afraid Peter would get himself psychoanalyzed and be pronounced a moron.

How very present to our consciousness is the moron; high-grade, medium, low-grade; the high-grade, we are told, the greatest menace of all to society. Gone are the enthusiasms over the "youthful mind", the charming, girlish or boyish spirit that we liked to feel prevailed in the make-up of our dearest friends; such terms now suggest undevelopment, moronic tendencies. Why, soon we shall be afraid even to keep "that school-girl complexion".

All of which is so, and yet—

isn't. I don't mean to say that the scientists are mistaken and that there are no morons; but the great mass of American youth today is very much what it was a generation ago. This is proved by the fact that adolescent novels are still widely read and loved, and read again, notwithstanding the fact that such a great number of sophisticated (some of them even salacious) books have been put on the market and got themselves talked about.

So many perverted stories have been written about perverted youth that youth is in danger of becoming perverted. And yet, youth goes on its normal round, growing up, loving, being loved, marrying, and bringing up families.

Since Queen Victoria's time, since the time when Longfellow wrote about the maiden

"Standing with reluctant feet
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet"

the world has made great strides in its treatment of women. But haven't our strides carried us a bit too far? There is no possible doubt that now women are free! We smoke, we swear, we wear knickerbockers, our hair has a mannish cut, we vote. It reminds me of a toast attributed to the late President Elliott:—"Here's to woman; once our superior, now our equal."

But we still retain one superiority. We still hold the honor of being the ones capable of carrying on the human race.

One of the advantages of writing for very young people is the escape from the sex problem. Up to a certain age (not a set age, for naturally some children develop along that line younger than others) but up to a certain age children have no sex at all. From infancy boys are conscious of being boys, and girls of being girls; but it is not a sex complex. In the opinion of little girls, boys have more freedom of speech, manners and dress. They are rather to be envied for this. And, if the little boys are of the domineering or teasing kind, they are also to be dreaded.

Also, from infancy little girls know that for certain things boys must be looked to; in dancing class, for instance, the little boys have to dance with the little girls. To the average normal child there is neither self-consciousness nor desire in this; it is merely, from their understanding, what the teacher decrees.

And so neuter infants, little girls and little boys, develop naturally into big girls and big boys—the adolescent period. And as always,

"In the spring a young man's
fancy lightly turns to thoughts
of love."

I feel sure Tennyson must have meant the Springtime of life. And it is up to the writers of books for these growing-up boys and girls, the adolescents, to make that time appear a beautiful, solemn, happy, holy epoch.

If an author has the gift of reaching the growing mind, he should not hide his light under a bushel by writing merely infantile stories. The gradual unfolding of

the boy and girl heart is a natural, healthy process, and it should be regarded as a privilege by all who write to help keep that process natural and healthy.

Guard carefully against making your stories too sentimental, too "sweetly pretty". Young people are quick to spot mawkishness. Make the situations of your story real, true to life. In a recent number of the Atlantic Monthly is an essay by Samuel McChord Crothers in which he discourses on the writing of history. He complains that historians pick and choose the facts they lay before their readers; give them what they call salient facts instead of the human everyday happenings of the particular epoch about which they write.

It is the human, everyday happenings of life that young people like to read about, dressed up with enough romance to lift them out of the commonplace, to enable them to think, as they read, "That might happen to me".

Don't cater to morbid tastes. Every young girl dreams dreams and sees visions; why not of the plumed knight with her colors on his lance, rather than of a Don Juan with a sneer on his lip and evil in his heart? With some writers, originality seems to consist in making the hero a villain; that is, making the chief character a villain at heart. Of course you must not swing to the other extreme and make your story like one I heard my daughter describe as being—"like very sweet, very weak lemonade."

There are many books to be written for the adolescent, from vigorous stories of adventure to wholesome love stories. Of these latter, the novels of Temple Bailey easily take first place.

I suppose the most widely and constantly read "story for girls" is Louisa M. Alcott's "Little Women." It is what the book-reviewers used to call a human document. In it nothing sensational happens, we are not conscious of working up to any particular crisis or denouement; but we are carried along from cover to cover of both volumes, absorbed, vitally interested in the lives of the four girls from the moment Jo's grumbles from the hearth-rug inform us that they are to have no Christmas presents that year, until the last chapter where Jo, "with a glad 'welcome home' led her lover in and closed the door."

No, I know—let me make haste to say it—I know that is not the last chapter. There is "Harvest Time", which serves as a grand chance for all the characters to line up and make their bow before the curtain, and satisfy the audience that they are "married and living happily ever after". But that always seemed a sort of appendix to me. I like the other ending much better.

How real Miss Alcott made all those years of poverty and fun, happiness and strife; how real the four sisters. How indignant we felt when Amy had to give up her treasured limes in school; how trembley and frightened while Beth lay ill with scarlet fever; how happy over Meg's wedding; I fancy there is only one incident in the en-

tire two volumes with which the modern normal girl would not be in entire sympathy; that is the agony of mind which Jo endures when she makes the splendid sacrifice of having her beautiful hair cut off and selling it to earn money to send her sick father.

A good many years ago, after considerable work on my books for girls and little children, I wrote a long love story, which the Penn Publishing Company brought out. It was called "Rosemary for Remembrance" and, as my first grown-up story, I was proud of it. It was thousands removed from the "best-selling" class, but it found a satisfactory number of readers, and I received some very gratifying letters concerning it.

Among the letters I received was one from an old friend, an older woman who had known me from childhood, had watched me grow up. She said some preciously sweet things about the book, praise that was dear to me; but she ended the letter: — "And now I am looking forward to the time when you will write a real novel." She had classed "Rosemary" with my juvenile work!

At the time, that was a real blow to my pride; but I have grown to realize that it was really a compliment, and I hope that my books, whether written about girls aged six or twenty six will always be regarded as "juvenile" in that they may safely be put into the hands of the adolescent.

This article seems very full of quotations, but I am going to risk giving one more. It is not exactly a quotation, but a paraphrase of a paragraph or so anent an article in The American Mercury. The author found, in taking a survey of three New England libraries, many discrepancies in the books of present-day writers. He also found that the librarians still exercised some censorship in giving out books to young readers. I could not make out the author's attitude toward this practice, whether he approved or not, but personally I think it a most excellent institution, one to be followed in every public library or reading room.

One can't abolish books from library shelves—as one library did —because they are not fit for the young, any more than one is expected to cut pork chops, say, off the family menu because the infant member of the family cannot digest pork chops. But it is not necessary for the girl of sixteen to read "The White Monkey" or "The Mother's Recompense".

These are days of very free speaking. One not only has the courage to call a spade a spade; one goes further and calls it a shovel. On a whole, I think it a safer method than the veiled suggestiveness of the nineties. "Suggestion always carries the active mind so much farther even than the author intends. The refrain of Chevalier's popular song, "It ain't exactly w'ot 'e says; it's the nasty way 'e says it" does not apply to present-day literature.

But why write, particularly for the adolescent, of those subjects that need this plain speaking? It is realism, to be sure, but not all

of realism. Life is made up of the sordid and the gay, the commonplace and delightfully unexpected; why not aid the developing mind to keep its upward trend, its hope and faith in beauty and purity?

It is possible to keep one's stories sufficiently realistic and yet bridge the gulf between the experience of life and the experience of books. And this without destroying glamour. Glamour is one of the most precious assets of youth, the rose of sunrise, the dew on the blossom, the bloom on the peach. Be careful, in your writing, not to destroy it.

And, as a reward of virtue, you will find that you stand a big chance of writing a best seller. It is an actual fact, borne out by publishers' statistics of the past thirty years, that, realism notwithstanding, the books filled with glamour number the highest hundreds of thousands in sales.

Writing the Thrift Article

George Myrle Dodson

This Is a Little Article but It is Big with Suggestion

A VERY popular subject at present with many magazines is thrift. Several have added special departments for thrift articles and suggestions. Some small periodicals, which are issued for distribution among bank depositors, are devoted entirely to thrift articles and fiction.

To the person who desires to write material of this sort I wish to give two general rules that I have found helpful in my own work. The first is, "Be as interesting as possible in everything you write, but be absolutely accurate."

Thrift is often considered a rather uninteresting subject, but the character of the finished work depends entirely on the author. No other field of writing demands more accuracy in every statement. When rates of interest or sums of money are mentioned, check up carefully on all figures and calculations.

The second rule is, "Be brief." The longest article on thrift should seldom exceed twelve hundred words. Usually, six to eight hundred words is better, and I have read many fine articles with only two or three hundred.

Better Homes and Gardens, Des Moines, Iowa, has a regular "Thrift in the Home" department. Articles are published on any thrift problem or plan, with special attention being given to material containing ideas on home-buying. Two to six hundred words is the usual length, with some few longer sketches.

The pay is one dollar each, regardless of length. Material is paid for on publication. While this amount may not seem like much reward, "Thrift in the Home" is the best place for the beginner in this work to send his first articles. Do not submit any badly written articles, as Better Homes and Gardens is a first-class magazine.

The more advanced author might try "The Family's Money" page of the American Magazine. Here articles based on actual facts and concrete examples are used. The length is generally about two columns, or one thousand to eleven hundred words. All material must be well written, and on a par with the rest of the magazine.

Getting On is a small eight-page thrift magazine which is distributed free by many banks to their depositors It is published monthly at 605 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago. It buys only about five pages of matter each month, which makes it a rather limited market. Each issue contains as the lead article a short sketch of some successful person, showing the part thrift played in his success. Stories of about six hundred words are used, with occasional articles of the same length. Stories must be clever, and at the same time must give a practical idea. For a short-story, I received about a cent-and-a-half a word on acceptance. The editor is very courteous when rejecting, and sometimes gives help in the form of a friendly letter. All material must be especially well done to stand a chance of acceptance. Although the magazine is not very large, it is one of the best-written best-edited, and best-illustrated small magazines in the country.

These are only a few of the markets for thrift articles, but I hope that these will help the writer interested in this work to get started. To be frank, I have never sold anything to the American's thrift department. I have, however, sold to the other markets mentioned, and find the publishers courteous in treatment, and prompt in payment.

Remember, also, that almost any general magazine will buy well-written material concerning any phase of personal or family finance, thrift, banking, budgets, and the like.

Before sending thrift stories or articles to these or any other magazines, read enough that they have printed to be certain that you know exactly what each one wants. Always send material of the length and character that seems most popular with the magazine to which you are trying to sell. After some hard work, you may some day be rewarded by seeing your article printed in the thrift department of the American. But do not expect that too soon!

It is quality and not quantity which counts. A centipede has a thousand legs but Ziegfeld never hires one for the Follies.

—*Kiwanis Chronicle*

Telephone Shop Talk

Edna L. Waldo

More and More Writers are Seeking for Accuracy and Vividness in their Use of Nomenclature

WRITERS of advertising copy and publicity for the world's largest corporation, the telephone industry, have been singularly successful in catching the public fancy with such expressions as "the voice with the smile" and "the guardians of the night" but by the professional story and play writer the telephone field, romantic as it is, has seemingly been neglected. Last winter a program committee for a state telephone convention, searching for short plays or monologues, even of the "wrong number" variety, found almost nothing available. The telephone is useful, it is funny upon occasion, it has even dramatic possibilities but somehow it has not attracted the scribblers. Even our leading weeklies, crammed with stories of big and little business, have passed by the trouble shooter, the grunt, the lineman, and the little girl who watches while the rest of us sleep.

Probably one reason is that the average person has little opportunity to come into close contact with the business and that the writer knows too few of the technical and slang terms with which to make his copy realistic. Therefore I am listing here just a few of the expressions which are commonly used and which I have heard from telephone employees everywhere. It may be that some of them will fit that weak spot in a story or will open up a train of thought leading to more investigation.

A "troubleshooter" is more properly a maintenance man whose duty it is to keep the lines in working order all the year round. Cloudbursts, sleet storms, floods, and blizzards are all in the day's work for him and he is equipped with skis, skates, snowshoes, and hip boots for use on appropriate occasions. He has been known to "requisition" heavy flannels in an out of season southern snow storm and he may even employ a bow and arrow to get a line across a swollen stream. In summer and winter he must follow his line even though it lead over hill or valley where no road can go; he must trim trees and brush to get through, surmount barbed wire, or break a way through drifts and ice. He is a jolly fellow for the most part, clumping along with his coil of wire, his "test set" (with which he can establish communication with central from any pole), and his can

of tobacco. Sometimes the "wire chief" or tester back in the office has given him a wrong location; sometimes when he has "got his trouble" and is ready to report in, the man on the other end is busy or absent—no laughing matter in zero weather. But the only thing which really tries his patience and ruins his disposition is the flivver his company provides for him to ride in and swear at.

Extensive construction work is done by a crew under a foreman, known also as in other lines, as the boss, the chief, or even "the guy in charge of the brain box." The latter means the place where specifications are kept, for everything must, of course, be done according to "spec", willy nilly. "Stringing" the wire and other aerial work is done by the lineman or "hiker", with the "grunt" helping from below. This ground man is also known as a "squeak" and is the printer's devil of the telephone crew; he receives the lowest pay and does all the work the gang can get out of him. If horses are used —rarely the case now—the driver is a "skinner". The foreman's assistant is, naturally, the "straw boss". Noisy at their work and play, their voices raucous from repeatedly shouting orders while aloft, the crew is more than noticeable when it piles on a truck and comes into town for food and lodging. Tramps are among them, the "boomers" who go from place to place, but, like the roving printer, their day is passing.

A "lead" is the main line of poles, usually a toll or long distance line, upon which copper wire is always used. There is no prettier sight to the initiated than a new toll lead such as was completed recently across the continent, its bright copper and white Pyrex insulators gleaming in the sun. To the telephone man the insulators which we love to shoot at on Sunday afternoons are "glass" and replacing them is one of his regular jobs. A pole, you may be surprised to learn, has a "belly" or curve which must be set facing the line, also such other appendages as cross arms and pins and "heel bolts". When the grunt digs a hole for a pole, he uses an eight foot shovel and a "spoon" fully as long, also a tamp or "loy" for replacing the earth solidly. A lineman, working on a pole, climbs by means of "hooks" or spurs and, when on the top, is protected by a body belt and safety strap. He has a hand ax which is no longer an ax, its edge having been removed to avoid accidents. He may use a "dead man" or a dummy pole to raise others; he has also a "pike" pole for leverage and when he pulls the slack out of a wire, he uses a contrivance called a "come along" or a "buffalo grip." "Sleeves", usually of copper, are used in connecting wires. Other equipment consists of a tree trimmer like a pair of huge scissors, red danger flags, and a ladder.

For work on cable, which is more complicated and has a terminology all its own, the cable man, a highly efficient specialist, rides out on the line in a little "cable car", spacing the rings which hold the

cable to the "messenger" (heavy 7000 lb. strand) above or, with a mirror, searching for cracks and leaks which will admit water. A term once the biggest joke to the layman is now almost obsolete in practice—"hoopicac"—a wire to which cable rings were fastened, used primarily in overcoming right-of-way difficulties. Cable wires are brought into terminals or "cans" on designated poles.

Inside the plant, the wire chief, testers, frame man, and switchboard man hold forth, but the most interesting figure to the writer and to his public is the operator herself. She works in shifts with frequent rest periods, under a supervisor and a chief operator in the larger places. But in most of the towns that we know, the places that we write about, one lone girl with occasional relief, does all the operating and watches over the sleeping populace. She it is who calls the doctor, summons the police, sounds the fire alarm, rouses the volunteer fire department, and who sometimes becomes the victim of bandits, fire, or flood. There is nothing finer than the way many of these relatively inexperienced girls have measured up in great emergencies. Here is romance and plenty of it. Contrary to general opinion, the operator does not have detailed instructions on how to meet all contingencies and if she had she would probably forget them. She is taught to use her own good judgment remembering how great is her trust.

In writing of the operator and her work, one may be facetious if he will for the possibilities of fun and farce in the calling and occasional getting of one's numbers are infinite. The terms head set, jack, plug, and cord are indispensable if one wishes to lend realism even to a short skit. The operator wears a head set which she connects to a "jack" or hole in the switchboard by inserting in it a plug on the end of a cord. All her connections are made by using similar plugs, cords, and jacks. Signals on the board are given by colored lights. When a girl sees before her a myriad of lights and has already "up" a number of cords, she often pulls out the wrong cord or inserts her plug in the wrong place. The wonder is really that she is right so much of the time especially when other operators on either side of her are repeating numbers too. There are great potentialities, too, in writing of the small town operator who looks out her front door, sees a neighbor pass, and reports, "Ain't no use in calling Jones—he just went over to the pool hall."

Some of the codes used by the operators are amusing. If, in a small exchange, you report "trouble" she writes it down variously on the "trouble sheet" as bdr "bell doesn't ring", cgc "can't get central", etc. When she is calling someone on the toll lines for you, you may hear her say "Wh" which means "We have your party" or "ux"—out—or "uxlw" out, left word. Most of the fascination of being an operator lies in the toll operating which is more interesting to the girl as well as to the po-

tential scribe. A common error is in supposing that an operator can or does listen in on conversations. Most modern equipment makes this mechanically impossible but it is always against the rules and even where it could be done, a girl is usually too busy. True enough, a telephone girl does accidentally hear enough and surmise enough by adding two and two to cause considerable excitement if she did begin to gossip. There's a good theme—suppose some morning the operator did decide to tell all she knew—just imagine the result!

Taking Pegasus A-Vacationing

Catherine Beach Ely

An Outing That Combines Change, Work, and Play Puts New Life Into One's Writing

AN annual change of scene improves the writer's output for the rest of the year; it may, indeed, mean the difference between success and failure. If he is too worn out to consider any combination of work with his annual rest, let him banish schedules during the vacation and spend the days without a thought of manuscripts; but for those authors (and they are probably in the majority) whose health permits some combination of their customary brain-activities with the yearly leisure-period, I tell this true story of my own vacation experiments and experiences.

I choose for my vacation a different section of the country each year, in order to gain fresh and stimulating impressions and make new contacts. As a contrast to my life in the city I usually select a simple, sometimes even primitive, rural environment for the outing. But if one stayed in the country most of the year, one could profitably go to the city for the annual vacation.

I find the vacation-period an excellent time for a survey of markets. In the bottom of my trunk are packed "Where and How to Sell Manuscripts" and other market-lists, and writers' magazines for the past year. Outdoors in shady comfort I carefully comb all these market-lists for magazine addresses overlooked before, or not consulted since the writing of recent manuscripts, and I enter on my own market-list additional addresses discovered.

After replenishing my attenuated market-list, I review The Writer's Monthlies for the past year. Many inspiring messages,

which had grown indistinct, are revived by this quiet rereading; and helpful hints, which were overlooked or hastily read when the magazine was first published, give me a new impetus. I finish this review by a re-reading of meaty write-ups bearing on my own specialty—feature-articles.

The outdoor environment also stimulates me to review old manuscripts. Somehow the fresh breezes and open vistas seem to invigorate stereotyped sentences and banish staleness. Of course, in an outdoor paradise, it requires more concentration to dig for synonyms and rebuild sentences than it does to begin a lyric to a rose, but concentration never comes amiss.

Is there an article or a story somewhat outside the writer's usual habit which needs quiet deliberation and a rested brain? What a congenial environment the outdoor vacation offers for pursuing this detached line of thought, which one was too busy to linger over in the hurried routine work! This is the writer's own hour, under the sky and facing wide horizons, to venture upon the manuscript which spontaneous choice dictates. Will this manuscript written to suit a vacation mood sell? The risk is worth taking, for the tides of outdoor vigor run high, and courage is at its zenith.

But the writer must not forget that it is vacation time. He should not spend the whole day plying his trade, even in the open air.

Last vacation my day's schedule frequently had the following arrangement: A walk after breakfast in the morning freshness, with a congenial friend; working at the writing-business in the shady outdoors for about two hours; typing an hour or two upstairs in my three-windowed room with its outlook on sunlit foliage. That ended the daily writing-period. After dinner (the middle meal of the day, according to rural custom) I forgot my trade and played at light reading in the swing, at chit-chat in the breezy orchard, or at motor-bus trips through a country new to me. In the evening, after supper, came the contemplative stroll with sunset views, the twitter of sleepy birds, and the soft brooding shadows of approaching night; and finally came long hours of sleep in a cool, quiet chamber.

Upon arriving at my destination I choose a writing-nook to be my outdoor studio during the vacation. My memories of vacation centre about these writing-nooks, where healthful days were passed delightfully.

In the Green Mountains of Vermont my writing-studio overlooked a deep ravine spanned by a viaduct. At the bottom of the ravine rollicked a little brook. Beyond the chasm, cloud and shadow ran races over mountain upon mountain, marshalled as far as eye could see in the luminous air of Northern Vermont. These fertile mountains were a symbol of wider metal horizons and increasing productivity of ideas.

Once on the Connecticut shore I chose my leafy workshop in the restful old town of Mystic. My chair and table occupied the cor-

ner of the ell, just outside my ground-floor room with private entrance. Framed in pendulous branches lay the distant blue waters of Long Island Sound. As a background for my nook, an old-fashioned flower-garden contributed color and fragrance. This environment was full of decorative-art ideas, and the town of Mystic was rich in the sea-lore of sailing-vessel days.

Again, I led my journalistic Pegasus to a New York State writing-nook on a hill-top (hill-tops are better than valleys for writers) where I could gaze across bright meadows to the cheerful lower ranges of the Catskills. Delicious sunny breezes with the cool sting of fifteen-hundred-feet elevation rumpled manuscript pages that Summer, and made Pegasus want to kick up his heels and race across country, instead of plodding in mental ruts.

During his Pennsylvania vacation my mount browsed on the spacious breezy lawn of a Susquehanna farm. He could watch the farmers reaping in the hill-pastures, while, at a stone's throw, the famous river sang of rural delights to revive jaded writers.

I scribbled last vacation near the foothills of the Connecticut Berkshires, beneath a group of splendid sugar maples. Across the road, rambler roses decorated an old stone fence which guarded a sunny meadow contrasting with the cool darkness of the dense woods back of it. Bird-songs and the twinkle of cow-bells accompanied my writer-thoughts. Sometimes the fire-alarm sounded weirdly up the hill from the little city of Danbury two miles away; the walk to the excellent Danbury library was just long enough for moderate exercise. Real country may be found on the edge of a city, for the writer who does not desire a completely isolated vacation.

Contrast, I think, is the secret of artistic effects and of vacation zest. Through the strenuous season we may taste the joys of an anticipated vacation as different as possible from the usual environment. Wisdom counsels us sometime during the year to "get down to the ground" in picturesque surroundings, be it for days, weeks or months; or, if the country-side be our habitat, to seek the varied pageant of the city. Whether our vacation come in Summer, Autumn or Winter, it should contrast with our ordinary routine.

It pays the writer to take a vacation every year in an environment so stimulating to health that it does not sacrifice productivity, even though the work-schedule be temporarily altered.

The beginner describes, the expert characterizes. The former tells, the latter vivifies. The one gives time to detail and specification, the other concentrates a revealing light on the one significant element in character that makes it solely itself and not another.—KARL VON KRAFT.

Writing Letters to Editors

Neil Wayne Northey

Part 2

"When and What To Write" Is the Title of this Installment of this Short Series and It is Even Better than Was the First

IS IT advisable to send a personal letter with every manuscript? What kind of letter should I write to editors who are slow about reporting on manuscripts, or who delay payment? An editor denies having received a certain manuscript, or says that it was returned as unavailable. I doubt the accuracy of his contention. Shall I tell him so and ask that he search further for the lost story? An editor who pays on publication has held one of my accepted articles more than a year. Would a "hot" letter get action and prevent a recurrence of the delay? Is there any advantage in querying editors regarding proposed articles, and what do editors think of such letters? What shall I say to the editor who has paid me less than half what I consider a manuscript to be worth?

These and a hundred other questions must be decided by the inexperienced writer, and his future as an author depends upon his decisions. Even the journalist or the fiction writer who has "arrived" must watch very carefully his correspondence with editors.

One of the first questions the new writer asks is whether or not he should send a personal letter with each manuscript. In a few instances a letter is not necessary, but as a rule I write a note, partly as a record for myself and partly for the information of the editor. From personal experience in editorial work, I know that a letter, if it be of the right kind, creates a good impression and gains attention.

A letter may mention a special point in the article or story of which the editor in his haste may not think, and would mean the difference between a sale and a rejection. It gives the manuscript a more personal appeal by serving to introduce the writer. It often influences the editor to write a personal note in explanation, if he can not use the manuscript as it is, thus tending to impress the writer's name on the editor's mind, so that it will be remembered when other contributions are submitted. It may advise the editor that photographic prints or drawings were mailed under separate cover. In cases where a magazine uses a

great amount of gratuitous material, such as the sporting publications, it will inform the editor whether or not the writer expects pay, unless he is known among editors as a professional writer. If he is unknown, a letterhead stating his business will place him in the professional class, and the editor will know that pay must be forthcoming, thus eliminating the possibility of a misunderstanding, as mentioned in last month's article.

There are many other things that could be said in favor of writing a letter with each contribution, but this should be enough. *Be as brief as possible,* yet make your letter complete enough to be understood.

What kind of letter should be written to editors who are slow about reporting on manuscripts or who delay payment? Certainly not one that is too snappy. In the first case, simply ask whether the manuscript has been received and considered. A good way to eliminate this trouble is to enclose a stamped, self-addressed card with the manuscript on which the following has been written or typed, or, if you use many of them, printed:

> Your contribution (give title of article or story. If cards are printed, leave space here for filling in title) has been received, and will be considered for publication as soon as our time permits.
> (Insert name of magazine here.)
> .....
> File No. .....

There are few editors or filing clerks who will not mail this card of acknowledgment back to you as soon as the manuscript is opened, if it is filled out ready for mailing. I have sold several articles to one magazine which never reports until the manuscript is set in type and proof mailed to me, unless one of these cards is enclosed. The space for file number is for the convenience of the filing clerk, for in some instances all manuscripts are filed until they are read and either accepted or returned.

Before I began using the card of acknowledgment, I mailed an article to a certain magazine, and as I had heard nothing from it at the end of six weeks, I wrote. There was no reply, and I wrote again after waiting several weeks. Four months passed, and still there was no word. I had good reason to believe that the magazine was reliable, although rather neglectful, and wrote another courteous letter. The article was then returned to me with a friendly note saying that as it was impossible to use the article soon it was being returned rather than keep me waiting longer. I might have lost patience with about the third inquiry, and got "hostile", but I didn't. I can still sell to that magazine any time. The whole thing could have been avoided, however, if I had enclosed one of the cards when the manuscript was sent.

If the editor is slow about paying, I send a letter something like this:

> I notice that my article "Black Cats As Fur Bearers" appeared in your November

number, and as a check has not been received in payment for it I am wondering if the business office has overlooked the account, or if the check has been lost in the mails. I thought it would be best to mention this without too much delay, as this may save your bookkeeper the trouble of searching through old accounts that are sometimes filed in more or less inaccessible places.

I wish to thank you for past courtesies, and hope that my work will continue to meet with your editorial favor in the future.

I have never lost but one check, and that was caused by the "death" of the magazine the month my story appeared. (Nope, I disclaim all responsibility).

If a manuscript is lost, it is natural for the writer to blame the editor—never the mails. He thinks the editor was careless: lost it—misplaced it in his files—deliberately threw it away. Also it is natural for the writer to tell the editor in a hot letter what he thinks about it. Don't do it; such a course of action will not get the results which a courteous letter will bring, and is almost sure to close a market.

The best thing to do is to prevent it. If the manuscript is a valuable one, send it registered, with return receipt requested. You will then know that it arrived. You will not need to send one of the acknowledgment cards when this is done.

Keep a duplicate copy of your contribution until it appears in print. This will protect you and the editor. Sometimes a manuscript is lost in the magazine office or in the printery during the process of editing or printing. It may have been paid for or not, but in either case the editor will appreciate another copy. It is sometimes wise to ask that your story be returned registered if it is not available, and send sufficient postage for that purpose.

What kind of letter do you write to the pay-on-publication editor who accepts a story and then holds it indefinitely? A hot letter will probably get results, but they will not be the kind you want. As likely as not, you will receive your story back immediately, with the "suggestion" that you send future stories elsewhere if you are in a hurry. In the circumstances the writer will be glad to receive his story back, for he can then offer it to another buyer, perhaps for cash, and it is doubtful if he will shed many tears because he has closed a market, such as it is. However, the manuscript may have been held so long that it is not salable, or it may be that the writer will have to hold it himself until it is seasonal again, or perhaps the editor will some day be working for a magazine that pays on acceptance, or the first one might change its policy and pay *pronto*.

Here again, it is better for the writer to avoid any possibility of trouble. Simply state in a letter accompanying the manuscript that if accepted, the contribution must be used within a stated

period, or paid for at the expiration of that time. The length of time depends upon the kind of publication and the character of the contribution. Usually six months should be sufficient. If the writer is in no particular hurry so long as he knows his contribution has been accepted, it is sometimes advisable to allow the editor a year. If the editor feels that to promise to use the article or story within a short time will inconvenience him by causing unnecessary attention, perhaps upsetting his schedule, he is likely to return it. All this can be avoided by selling only to publications that pay on acceptance.

In reply to the question regarding the advisability of querying editors, it is my opinion that unless the writer's work is known to the editor, either by appearing in other publications or through past sales to the editor to be queried, there is little value in writing. After the writer has sold one or two manuscripts to a publication, if he has an idea for an article that he believes will suit the editor and if the editor in his past correspondence has written in a rather personal, friendly manner, querying will often keep the author's name fresh in the memory of the editor and lead to sales. However, it would be unwise to carry this practice to the extreme merely for the purpose of causing the editor to remember you. He will remember you, all right—as a pest; and his reply will likely discourage further dealings.

One problem that requires great care in handling is the question of what to write to the editor who has not paid as much as the writer expected. If the author sold to a pay-on-publication journal without an understanding as to the rates he was to receive, there is, of course, nothing for him to do but to accept the check and resolve not to send material to that magazine in the future, unless he wishes to discuss the matter in a discreet way by correspondence.

Such misunderstandings can be avoided in several ways. The writer—if he be really established—may state his rates when he sends out a manuscript; he may ask for an offer, if he is not sure what rates the magazine pays; he may sell only to editors who pay on acceptance; he may learn the magazine's rates from other writers or from the market lists in writers' publications; he may sell his work by appearing in person before the editor, or he may market it through a sales service.

If an editor who pays on acceptance sends a check which, in the writer's opinion, is too small, the writer should be very careful not to be too abrupt when he writes about or returns it. As a rule, editors are glad to pay all their publication will permit in order that they may procure high class material. Instead of ranting at the editor about low rates, if the writer, when he returns a check, explains that he was misinformed regarding the amount to expect, he will still be in position to send material to the same market again if he should have something which fails to command higher rates else-

where. And the chances are that he will have such material from time to time. In fact, the editor probably offered him all that his material was worth in the first instance.

Personally, I try to follow the same policy in writing to editors as I would in any other business. If I had a commodity to sell, I should not try to market it without first learning how much a particular firm was paying, what its terms were, what it specialized in, and other details. Neither would I expect to sell apples, melons or other produce to a firm by querying, until it knew the quality I was producing. And certainly I would say, when shipping goods, that I expected pay for the merchandise before a certain date. Also, if I were so foolish as to send something on consignment, and was dissatisfied with the check received for it, I believe I would think twice before I sent a spicy letter to the firm, which would forever close that market. I would at least first use all the tact I had.

If the man who has produced something in writing will follow the rules of good business, he will not only avoid a great amount of unpleasant correspondence, but will know what to say, when to say it, and how. And he will keep a carbon copy of every letter, so that he will know exactly what he wrote—especially if he is querying an editor and outlines a story, for he will want to follow this outline when the story or article is written.

Pungencies

The loftiest merit of a tale (or play) rests upon the effect it produces, not on the fancy, but on the intellect and the passions.—BULWER LYTTON.

It has been noted, and it deserves to be emphasized, that action in the drama, as in life, is of two kinds, physical and spiritual. We have likened the drama to the prize fight, which is its primitive prototype. In the prize fight, however, the conflict is physical almost to the exclusion of the spiritual element; whereas, in the true drama, physical action often suffers eclipse while spiritual conflict monopolizes attention.—CHARLTON ANDREWS.

To know every detail, to gain an insight into each secret, to learn every method, to secure every kind of skill, are the prime necessities of success in any art, craft, or trade. No time is too long, no study too hard, no discipline too severe for the attainment of complete familiarity with one's work and complete ease and skill in the doing of it. As a man values his working life, he must be willing to pay the highest price of success in it—the price which severe training exacts.—HAMILTON WRIGHT MABIE.

The Fiction Story "Lead"

George C. Henderson

Here We Have a Discussion of an Interesting Analogy Between Fiction Writing and Journalistic Practise

IN newspaper work the first paragraph of a story is called the "lead." Usually it is so written that it contains the whole story — without elaboration, of course. If all the rest of the yarn had to be lopped off for make-up reasons, the lead would convey the essentials. Writing a good lead is the hardest thing to learn in news writing. By the time you have mastered it you are a reporter.

What can a fiction writer learn from the newspaper lead? Well, first he can learn to write good fiction leads. And in this way: Cub reporters nearly always make up a chart for their desks containing the different types of leads. The fiction writer can apply this rule to stories. Then he can extend the idea to lists of transitions, descriptions, conflict, action, comparisons and the portrayal of more definite things, such as emotional states like hysteria, terror, expectation, shock, reflection, sorrow, philosophy and suspense.

You are about to start your story. What will be your first words? Turn to your chart, which contains samples of leads by the best writers. Study them for type, method, or tone, with reference to your needs. Make your own classification, whether historical, anecdotal, dramatic, intense, etc. However, mere classifying has no value in itself unless it simplifies usage, so keep that in mind. When a young engineer starts to design the architectural approach to a bridge, he studies the construction of other approaches with the idea of imitating any feature that best suits him. He doesn't waste time arguing whether it is Renaissance or Gothic in conception.

The following are a few selected leads, chosen from a large number in my working table, with the idea of showing contrasts:

The historical lead:

"At the beginning of the reign of Louis XV. a young man named Croisilles, son of a goldsmith, was returning from Paris to Havre, his native town." — *Croisilles*, ALFRED DE MUSSET.

Anecdotal lead, to a very short story:

"I started for school very late that morning and was in great dread of a scolding, especially because M. Hamel had said he would question us on participles, and I did not know the first word about them." — *The Last Lesson*, ALPHONSE DAUDET.

Dramatic beginning:

"La Vieuville was suddenly cut short by a cry of despair, and at the same time a noise was heard wholly unlike any other sound. The cry and sounds came from within the vessel."—*Fight with a Cannon,* VICTOR HUGO.

The narrative lead, or the "once upon a time" type:

"There lived in Babylon in the reign of King Moabdar a young man named Zadig, of a good natural disposition, strengthened and improved by education. Though rich and young, he had learned to moderate his passions; he had nothing stiff or affected in his behavior, he did not pretend to examine every action by the strict rule of reason, but was always ready to make proper allowances for the weakness of mankind." An example of the frank, straightforward method of at once presenting a vivid picture of a character as against the method of permitting the character's conversation to characterize him.—*Zadig the Babylonian,* FRANCOIS M. A. DE VOLTAIRE.

Compare the foregoing work of the "old-fashioned" school with the intense type that has become the vogue in America today:

"Painted mellow red in the glow that lit the fire-tipped buttes beyond Loma Grande, a figure stood motionless at the corner of the high, thick adobe wall fence. Grasped at the right hip, with even pressure of hand and finger-muscles, was the fancy ivory stock of a gun, in which was a round medallion of a rearing colt; and protruding around the edge of the mud-brick enclosure was the scroll engraved barrel, five-and-one-half inches long. In the left hand at rest for the moment behind the wall was an exact duplicate of the leveled pistol." This beginning of a novel, "Gun Gospel," by W. D. Hoffman (A. C. McClurg & Co.), gives an immediate picture of impending danger and the deadly intent.

The same open-eyed, breathlessness is attained from the start of "Velvet", by William J. Neidig, in the Saturday Evening Post, in a first-person narrative:

"I do not say that Donovan wished to murder the sheriff of that county, but he did, in my presence, softly consign him to the center of the next state east, which was Nevada, nearly. Then he returned to the subject of conversation, much as if the telegram had not arrived."

The sensational-proposition lead is of the same general type:

"He would do almost anything for a hundred dollars," is the very short initial paragraph in "The Spice of Life," by Gardner Hunting (Colliers). In this type of beginning it is the "proposition" that interests the reader. It has many variations. I started one of my recent short-stories in this fashion: "He did not tell his wife he had decided to kill a man. She would have offered some trivial objection." It is a newspapery way of writing, putting the problem up to the reader in a sentence.

The atmospheric type of lead is very effective in the "intense" story:

"Gear grease agrees with steelwork rats. Gear grease is dauby, rich and yellow, an excellent substitute for butter. Gear grease and hunky punk for staff of life; and for dessert banana skins, bits of fat.....On this the rats wax fat. They grow as big as spaniels, ugh!" Thus R. G. Kirk, in "Transfer," Saturday Evening Post, plunges into his horror-story with a paragraph equal to two pages of description in fixing his atmosphere.

But for sheer intensity nothing rivals the use of the present tense when coupled with masterly word picturing:

"Men and women are struggling to be born again in Leeston's picnic grove. They are trying to leave their shells under the elm trees and float to heaven. Teapot torches hang from the tree limbs. Moanings come from the grove; reach up Main street to the idlers and backsliders who stand under the porticoes of Leeston's store; moaning of folks who are agonized by the touch of earth. Bodies roll on the ground and heads lift and nod to the preacher's words."—*Rackteen,* FISHWOODE TARLETON, in Adventure.

However, it should be said in the foregoing connection that the present-tense form of narration—the historical present, as it is called—is easily overworked, to the great disadvantage of the story.

Another interesting literary discussion has arisen with regard to the authorship of "The Lone Fishball". The verses are now familiar to college men in practically all languages, and by some students, even at this late day, the lines are sung as heartily as in the fifties. The claim of their American origin is not affected by the circumstance that in Germany they have long been known as "Der Einsame Fischball", and in France as "La Balle de Poisson", and in Italy as "Il Pesceballo". Whoever wrote the words—and they have been attributed to many eminent in letters—ages are likely to pass before the lines

The waiter to him he doth call
And gently whispers, "One fishball."
The waiter roars it through the hall,
The guests all start a "one fishball."
He says again, quite ill at ease,
"A piece of bread, too, if you please."
The waiter roars it through the hall,
"We don't give bread with one fishball."

shall have vanished from college student tradition.

—*Christian Science Monitor.*

From the Brown Owl's Oak

Leaving your body at home

A new-rich man, having bought an estate, and having heard somebody say that its wood was "full of rodents," ordered his superintendent to kill them all off at once and stock it with squirrels and rabbits.

Every little while somebody breaks forth anew with advice to writers to "avoid style and write plain, everyday language." His way of putting it shows him to know the meaning of "style" as well as the park-owner knew the meaning of "rodent."

About messaging from Mars

Your manuscript begins thus: "As explained in a previous article, there has been discovered a method of communication with Mars, the present abode of all the great and good minds that once sojourned on Earth. How this was accomplished is a story by itself, which in due time will be fully told. Let it suffice, at this time, to give an interview with Mr. Peter Cooper." So dragged in, Mr. Peter Cooper delivers your criticism of things mundane as they are and sets forth your theories of what they ought to be.

We are sorry, Sir, but we fear that neither you nor we nor the fellow betwixt us and the gatepost can get away with it after this fashion. We must go a good deal further than your article goes.

Unless the device relied upon is developed far enough to create illusion and rouse our interest in the state of things it supposes, it is, as the young folk say nowadays, a total loss.

What with people's being so sophisticated (a very superficial sophistication it very often is, but that does not change the result) and their being indifferent, and their being occupied with their own interests, and so on, and so on, we can't "get" them in any such easy way as this.

In vain does the fowler spread his net in the sight of the bird, and in vain is it to attempt to get the attention of the general public by putting ideas and theories personal to us into the mouth of someone who has "passed on" and telling twentieth-century readers that the great man is speaking to them from another world. A lecture continues to be a lecture still.

Build up a fanciful conception; intrigue them through the presentation of strange persons in strange or non-earthly or bizarre locale; give them the illusion of people and scenes that are different and of things doing and being done in an environment novel and strange, where the conditions of human existence are made to appear novel—tell them a story, tell them a story that holds their attention—and up to a certain point they will follow you when you present your own views through the acts and speech of these persons in these artificial circumstances. At least they will do so if you succeed in creating an illusion sufficient to hold their attention.

But if any such device is to succeed, it must create enough illusion, stir enough sense of the unusual and "different," to hold attention through the story. The views must get through by riding on the story; the average reader must be enticed into thinking them a part of the story or made to take them in order to get the story. There will of course be exceptional readers who will take the story for the sake of the views, but experience shows that ordinarily it is the other way round.

What can you see?

Agassiz, was it, who, when a would-be student applied to him for instruction, gave him the skeleton of a fish and left him to study it and report what he saw? At noon the applicant reported, and at the end of the afternoon. Agassiz said only, "Study the fish." So the next day, and the next. "Study the fish."

It was a test of the neophyte's ability to observe, to observe accurately, to observe thoroughly, to keep on and on observing, observing, observing.

What can you report about a person after a half-day in his company? After a day, two days, three days? How much have you trained yourself to see? Try it. Give yourself a test.

And then keep on observing through the rest of your writing life!

How true must it be to be "true"?

Evidently a good many persons are puzzled by the frequent employment of the word "true" to designate a well-known variety of story. Even among writers of experience the impression is met that the magazines specializing in this variety of narrative require the tales they print to be fact or founded on fact.

Others regard the term as dishonest and feel an increased dislike for such tales because of the conviction that they are so miscalled with intent to entice the reader into reaching for his purse.

The publishers and editors of these magazines have only themselves to blame for these misunderstandings—assuming that the second opinion is wholly mistaken.

Unless they are unbelievably stupid they know that the first thing which "true" means to nearly everybody is, direct and outright adherence or conformity to actual fact, and that none of its other meanings is either so fixed in the general mind or so clear to it.

Some time ago a manufacturing firm was ordered to drop the word "silk" from the trade-name of its product, because though the product was legitimate merchandise it was not silk. The error of judgment in calling tales true that are not true in the first and most common sense of the word resembles that of the manufacturers. Usages come into being more or less by chance, but if they prove unfortunate they need not be continued.

In defense of their employment of "true," the publishers and editors say that some of their stories really are "true" in the stricter sense. They do not stress this defense, however, for the number of stories that are thus substantially true narratives of actual experience is nowadays relatively small.

"True" with a difference

Their chief defense amounts to this: that the stories are true in the sense of being faithful to reality—meaning a particular kind of reality. Our stories (they would say) aim to be true to the realities of life among the great mass of ordinary people; they are written for everyday folks, who want the sense of reality that comes from reading about their own kind of life (but with fingers crossed, some of them add hurriedly, "as they think it is.")

Yet even this explanation shows the publishers and editors themselves to blame for any misjudgment that overtakes them on account of the trade-name they give their product. They have chosen —unnecessarily—to use the word and to use it with no hint that it is to be understood in one of its secondary, less familiar senses. They do not need to be familiar with Campbell's Canons concerning the choice of words to know that in continuing to employ it they are continuing to expose themselves to misunderstanding and therefore to disapproval.

Calling tales "true" that if true are true only in the sense in which a great many novels, novelets, and short-stories have been, are, and will continue to be true, has naturally caused misunderstanding and suspicion, and the confusion has not been lessened by those who intimate that the "true" tale and fiction are fundamentally dissimilar—that "fiction" does not deserve to rank with invented narratives in the popular recent style. Perhaps however the magazines have been penalized to some extent for this in the effort and expense to which they have been put in expounding to puzzled contributors what is necessary to make a tale "true" for their purposes.

Philosophizing the theory

If report be true, they have had their troubles in this direction, and that they have may be fortu-

nate. It seems to be leading them to inquire seriously what (besides merely a variety of tale that increases circulation) they really have brought away from the rummage-sale of literary ideas. They know that it is a money-maker. They hope that in characteristics and technique it will prove distinct enough from other fiction to be described and defined as a type, as the short-story can be described and defined as a type. They would be tickled to death (who can blame them?) to have originated a form of tale that not only commands widespread popular reading but also compels recognition as combining and applying artistic means and purposes in such a way as to represent a new category among literary classifications.

But tracing the relationships and working out and verifying a sound philosophy of a literary type, is not to be accomplished shortly. Decades went to the study of the short-story before its essential characteristics were satisfactorily realized. It has not yet been ten years since the first settings of "true-tale" eggs were hatched, and the chicks have so far disclosed such a heterogeneous lot of characteristics that even the men who set the eggs acknowledge themselves sometimes unable to say what sort of brood has been brought off.

Indeed, though now and then an article has appeared giving practical suggestions about the preparation of such stories, no serious study of the fundamental theory they involve has been attempted. It is only within the last two or three months, the Owl hears, that anyone intimately acquainted with this variety of magazine story has undertaken to analyze and evaluate it and bring together systematicly a study or tentative "philosophy" of its characteristics and technique—thus performing a service that might reasonably have been expected from literary departments and graduate students in the colleges and universities.

When this informal study has been completed and appears in print, it will provide at least a point of departure for a better and a better-informed understanding of this too often misnamed variety of fiction which, in six or eight years, has come to be read by more of our people than read the Saturday Evening Post weekly or The American Magazine monthly.

Microscope distance, poor lenses, and bad light

"Why," exclaims one of the Owl's Owl friends, alarmed by the flood of proposals everywhere in America for all kinds of censoring control over all kinds of people and things, "Why is it that the persons who break out with a demand that this, that, or the other be censored, are nearly always persons who don't see beyond the end of their nose?"

The Owl suspects that that is the answer: they don't see beyond the end of their nose. The answer to the question, "Why do they see only as far as the end of their

nose?" was probably given by the good Doctor Watts in accounting for the fighting of cats and dogs: "For 'tis their nature to." The limitation is much the same in each instance; and of course it applies equally to the crusaders, for your instinctive crusader is only a variety in the genus.

It is true that sometimes what our Mr. and Mrs. Fixits call upon all the world and the rest of mankind to arise and do something about by passing another law, does really exist, and even that, sometimes, the world might on the whole be better off without it. But it is characteristic of the genus to be a little short of tolerance and judgment (and possibly sometimes of intelligence), as well as of vision, and its members can and do become rabid not only against what is immaterial, but against what to others appears innocent, or wholesome, and possibly one of the most important things in life—consider the recent bill to make membership in one of the great church organizations of the world, a felony.

But merely its short-sightedness is enough to warrant suspicion of the censorial type of mind and all its works. Wisdom and judgment are not likely to be found among those who are blind to or ignorant of all but that which can be seen with the object held against the end of the nose—and without even moving it about to get the light on it.

An instance of the human touch

The Owl heard lately of a book in manuscript — perhaps 80,000 words or more—written by a woman seventy years old who makes her home in an abandoned house in sight of the sea and peddles needles for a living.

It is said to be in terse, homely language, and to be good enough to publish, though all it recounts is the life of a woman of the "poor whites" class of the South—the author herself. She saw slaves flogged, the disbanding of the armies, the crude beginnings of some of the big railways (she was cook for construction-gangs), and life on the trading-boats of the rivers.

From the description given of it, it is a book "close to the ground," interesting because the little things it tells were such important things and so interesting to her.

That the book may be publishable seems more probable because some years ago a dozen or fifteen papers published serially a long manuscript of hers syndicated by one of the New York papers. At that time she was living in a hen-house! Apparently she was too ignorant of such matters to think of trying for book publication also.

Here certainly is the human touch.

Three-directional attention in writing

We were remarking a month or two ago how easily, without realiz-

ing it, one can drop into a sort of shorthand in dealing with matters that are thoroughly familiar to him, but that must be put to the reader in self-translating terms if he is to understand them without excessive effort.

Shorthandish expression may result from intense preoccupation with the essential substance itself, but it is far more likely to be the result either of haste or of undeveloped ability in the writer to get outside himself while writing and take detached note of both what he means to say and how he is saying it.

The haste may be the hurry of carelessness and indifference or of temperamental impetuousness, or it may be the haste of a busy person writing under pressure; but inability to detach oneself indicates incomplete command of the mental processes necessary in writing.

The writer must be able in his head to do two if not three things at once: (1) think the thought itself accurately and logically—a process of subjective concentration; (2) pay detached, or objective, critical attention both to his thinking (in order to check up on the soundness and accuracy of its substance), and to the words in which phrase by phrase and sentence by sentence he is setting forth the thought (in order to make certain of clearly and accurately uttering, or "outering," what is in his mind); and in addition to this (3) not infrequently keep in view the particular tone and manner that his article and its language need, because of the topic, or of the purpose of the article, or of its being addressed primarily to some certain kind or class of reader.

Lying by till twilight

♣ ♣ Pete Peters says, "'T always gives me a grouch against an author when he's wrote a good story thet I ain't got the brains to appreciate. ♣ "America has two national birds, the soarin' eagle an' the knockin' yellow-hammer."

♣ ♣ Add similes: He was as scarce of coin as a newspaper radio program is of program details.

♣ ♣ "What shall I write about?" ♣ It has been evident for five years that a crisis was approaching in China. Perhaps when the Cantonese reached the Yangtze region you had a nice collection of informative and interpretive articles all worked up and ready to send out?

♣ ♣ Keep it quiet, but the Owl now knocks off and steals the afternoon. ♣ He has a new book—just out. It's astonishingly interesting. ♣ It's name is "Where and How to Sell Manuscripts." ♣ If the Owl were asked to sub-title it, he would add, "or How to Take and Tame Editors." ♣ Though of course some editors are naturally tame. ♣ And domesticated. We have heard writers speak of editors by the name of one of the most domestic beasts of burden.

The Best Things from PRINTLAND

Poets Debate Modern Verse

The modern American city jars the nerves of the modern American poet. Prominent verse makers assembled here at Vassar recently in a conference on " the strength and weakness of American poetry," agreed that urban life was a hurdle too steep for Pegasus to jump and declared the resultant "city verse" a decided weakness in our nation's poesy.

Not only poetry, but the criticism of it, suffers from metropolitan conditions, according to Edward Davison, who besides being a poet is a Professor of English Literature at Vassar.

"The chief literary periodicals are written by people in New York," Mr. Davison told a gathering of Vassar alumnae which was giving the conference. "That means they are written in an atmosphere of tobacco smoke, elevators and typewriters." Under such conditions true criticism and great poetry were difficult. He feared the effects of the "city conception of poetry" would exercise a baneful influence upon the poets of today.

There was not one in the gathering of seven widely known poets to say a good word for the city, not even William Rose Benet, who tunes his lyre in New York. Padraic Colum went even further than his contemporaries and taunted them with being relics of a bygone age, incapable of expressing in deathless lyrics the marvels of modern science.

Hervey Allen, Professor of English at Vassar, demurred at this. He expressed an optimism that in America, which had broken away from the weary civilizations of Europe, some genius might arise to do it.

Only one poet, apparently, was undisturbed by the menace of modern urban America—the only woman poet in the gathering. Marguerite Wilkinson ignored the weaknesses of American poetry and concentrated upon its virtues.

"This era in American literature is notable," she said, "because it has begun to produce poetry with fine local flavor, rising straight from the soil." She cited the works of Robert Frost as an example.

"We have also begun to express

personality and character and to interpret them so well that some of the characters we meet in poetry are more real than chance acquaintances we meet in real life," she said, and cited the work of Edward Arlington Robinson in this connection.

"We have also begun to make sincere lyrics of womanhood, telling naturally, simply and without affectation the things in the hearts of women," in her opinion.

There was a danger, she believed, of poets trying to be too intellectual at the expense of emotion, and in their striving to be interesting of running the risk of sensationalism. She felt that when the intellect worked alone there was danger of producing self-conscious verse, defeating its purpose, which should be emotional.

William Rose Benet demurred that since the writing of poetry was a craft, poems must be fashioned after the emotion which caused them had passed. The process, therefore, was an intellectual one; but he also felt the danger of too much intellectuality.

Leonard Bacon declared that one danger to American poetry was the American tendency to form "schools and groups and tendencies." Because of this, he said, poets got the idea that certain things were the right things to do, and thus lost their individuality.

Du Bose Heyward and Mr. Davison assailed the city on numerous counts.

"The stupendous development of the modern city," said Mr. Heyward, "has done something terrible to people trying to be artists. The individual resents the control of the crowd. In a state of rebellion his egotism is heightened and the result is city verse."

Mr. Davison inveighed against the urban encounter of twenty smokestacks standing where a grove of pines ought to be against the glorious sunset. The Woolworth tower, he asserted, was of no poetical value except for the lives of the people within it and those who created it.

It was at this juncture that Mr. Colum swung his Irish bludgeon on the assembly.

"The poets of today have not caught up with the fact that the world has recently completely changed," he said. "There are no poets contemporary with the age. There cannot be. There is no one like Homer to sum up the knowledge and beauty of this age as Homer did of his. There is no possibility of a Dante, nor of so complete a poem of the age as was 'Faust.' Who can express the scientific advance of today—interpret the chemist and the engineer and Einstein's work — in human terms?"—*New York Times.*

Literary Fashions

It has become fashionable to-day in our letters to write in a style of alleged vernacular "strength", a manner of speaking that for vulgarity, coarseness, slovenly disregard of inherited decencies and fitnesses, has not been exceeded in any earlier period of English expression. To say this is, of course,

to announce oneself as hopelessly out of the movement. . . .

Partially, this tendency may be explained as one of the many abuses of the democratic ideal. One man is as good as another, we declare in our political or social life; very well, one word is as good as another in our way of speaking and writing. Perish the thought that there is an aristocracy of literary expression! A passé nation like France may cherish such notions, but not the full-blooded American for whom robust, forthright phrase is ever the preferred thing. Away with the idea that from Beowulf to Hardy, Conrad and Kipling, Barrie and Shaw, James and Howells, there actually has been a kind of writing which illustrates the genius of the tongue and, seen *en masse,* constitutes the Upper House of English use. . . . .

Involved in this deplorable result is that pseudo-Americanism which believes we should as a proof of our patriotism cut off entirely from the literary Past, which, by the way, alone made American literature a possibility, and, as part of our independence, develop and strenuously use our own blessed manner of speech. We have an American Constitution, why not an American Language? Already our idioms and locutions differ markedly from those of the British; let the good work go on that we may have a truly indigenous, autochthonous product, to which we can point with pride. There is a certain specious plausibility about this, for it is undeniably true that a new habitat, a different civilization, breeds new expression,—language being the outcome and setting down of these new experiences. Granted. But to cut off from a knowledge and familiar exercise of the historic riches of English coming to us from the great masters overseas, is to ask for the flower without the root. The sub-soil is important in agriculture and none the less in literature viewed as the result of a skilful, happy, and forceful handling of the mother tongue. Whether we like it or not, the base, the foundational pillar of our speech is English. . . . . .

Another indubitable reason for the trouble is that orgy of the ego which has made such violent inroads into what used to be regarded as the private domains of personal life. It is now quite in the literary mode to speak in print of almost anything that has happened in the personal experience, to air the rankest of our thoughts,—I suppose upon the Freudian principle of cure by public ventilation. . . .

The stylistic acrobatics of the day are part of the general debacle of sound writing. There are sentences in The Mauve Decade that should affect a normal taste exactly as the epidermis is affected by August flies. The two latest novels of Ford Madox Ford have pages hardly written in English at all, but rather in a strange Fordian lingo peculiar to the author. . . . . The absurd impressionism of Fannie Hurst in her later books, "Appassionata" and "Mannequin", when compared with the purity of manner exhibited in her earlier

short stories, however interesting on the side of experimentation, makes one shudder to think how future writers with but a tithe of her talent may wreak themselves upon the longer-suffering mother-tongue! . . . . . .

The truly creative artists of Letters should set themselves as a solid phalanx against any and all encroachments upon good English, good taste, and a balanced treatment of Life in literature. Lopsided emphasis, eccentricity that is explained by insufficient training, unlicensed and ignorant departures from the centripetal influence of the best tradition, should be guarded against as foes, not friends; and it is the accredited writers themselves who should be keenest in defense of their inherited rights and their noblest privileges. If they wax careless or indifferent, why expect the half-trained or untrained public who buy their books to take on the white man's burden?

In this unsavory spectacle of tasteless, ill-mannered, forced, and vulgar writing the influence of the newspaper is unhappily in evidence. Some of the best idiomatic writing of the day can be found on the editorial pages of our great dailies. But it is equally true that much of the grotesque, the banal, and the ephemeral results from the newspaper desire to stimulate a jaded eye, to avoid the cut-and-dried, and to be novel and striking at all odds. Next to the rapid creations of spoken speech, the newspaper is our most powerful matrix of new idiom. Indubitably a great deal that is fresh, that has bite and tang and verve, comes to us in this way, and the best of it gradually is assimilated into our more decorous speech mode. All the same, there is ever the danger that in the attempt to be racy, you may become horse-racy. And many of our younger ambitious makers of books are using the methods of journalism to secure the "punch", the "wallop", or whatever be the descriptive slang of the moment, to the detriment of their style, and the blurring of their sense of more permanent values. Probably there would be a vast assent to the statement that the deadliest of literary sins is dullness. These lively youngsters who are so vocal in print with their mouthings and posturings, cannot be called dull; that may gladly be conceded to them. They make us sit up and take notice, they keep us on the *qui vive* as to what will come next; reading them is rather a breathless business, for this reason: slumber is far distant, and as we have been told before this, "slumber is a criticism."

Nevertheless, it may be humbly hinted that along with the deadly sin of dullness, thus avoided, there is another (why not, since the deadly sins are seven?) rampant among us, shrieking up and down the literary land: the sin of Vulgarity, which I capitalize to give it its due prominence. It will be a happy day in Literature and all its interests when the brilliant makers of belles-lettres, to whom naturally we look for leadership, shall draw away from these yokel clownings masquing as originality, with the

same instinctive feeling with which a man in life shrinks from a failure to meet an obligation involving his personal honor. It will be a healthy day for Letters when authors self-protectingly exchange the shibboleth "We don't do that"! For social power, social pressure, is of all the most potent to produce results. Once make it bad form to wreak oneself licentiously on the native speech and to specialize on the lavatory aspects of human life, and the whole matter will take care of itself. Is there any way to such a desideratum? Only one that can be seen with the naked eye, and it dislikes me to use the word: culture.

Culture refuses to be fooled by the naive notion that the new is necessarily of value in itself; while open-minded to the acceptance of that which is worthy although new, it properly puts the new on trial, seeing no reason in the world why a thing long-tried and meeting the requirements should be regarded as other than an aristocrat, and demanding that the parvenu, the newcomer of yesterday or to-day, submit credentials and establish a claim before being admitted to the inner circle. A diligent perusal of our popular periodicals at the present time plainly reveals that we practise the reverse; that there would seem to be something sacrosanct in the very matter of making an appeal in the current year of grace, to the disadvantage of some masterpiece which won its place a decade ago. Our young critics are like children enamoured of new toys, shoddy, grotesque, may be, and far inferior to those so soon thrown away into the corner of the nursery simply because they belong to yesteryear. Of old, as we know, the Athenians were ever seeking a new thing; today, we out-Athens Athens in this regard.—RICHARD BURTON, in *The Forum.*

"The Best Similes of 1926" Have Variety

The "best similes of 1926" the sixth annual crop, have been gathered by Frank J. Wilstach, author of "A Dictionary of Similes."

The following selection from a long list gives an idea of the present trend:

Peaceably inclined as a heavyweight champion. — American Lumberman.

Rare as an unbroken spring in a taxicab.—F. P. A.

Empty as a Detroit stable.—Anon.

Elusive as the eyes of a coquette. —Anon.

Shaky as a set of flivver windows.—Anon.

Bashful as a sophomore in a raccoon coat.—Anon.

Useless as a label on the Statue of Liberty.—Anon.

Proud as a cootie on a General's coat.—Anon.

Delicate as freshly blown bubbles.—Anon.

Terrible as a radio trio.—Anon.

Slick as an oyster in a bottle of castor oil.—Anon.

Welcome as a caterpillar in a bird's nest.—Anon.

Knocked him cold as a form letter.—Anon.

Incredible as a bankrupt bootlegger.—Anon.

Mean as the man who gave a homing pigeon for a birthday present.—Anon.

Divided against itself like muttonchop whiskers.—Arthur Baer.

She sang like an angel leaning from a cloud.—E. Barrington.

Life is playing a violin solo in public and learning the instrument as one goes along.—Arnold Bennett. [This, however, is a metaphor.—Ed.]

Curled up like a homeless anaconda.—Stephen Vincent Benet.

Obscure as the King of Italy.—Toledo Blade.

Empty as the ceremony of kissing the hand of a Queen.—Gladys Bollman.

Unfriendly to the touch as a horsehair sofa.—Charles L. Brown.

Practical as a bank.—Catherine Brady.

About as welcome as a creaking floor is to a burglar.—George Broadhurst.

The faces of the crowd around the burning building looked like a flower garden in hell.—Katherine N. Burke.

About as much alike as a drawing room and a corral.—Walter Noble Burns. [This is not a figure of speech at all.—Ed.]

Sterile as a test-tube.—John Carter.

Fell over as softly as a dying creampuff.—George S. Chappell.

Exquisitely unwise, like music daring to twist free of the words of a song.—Grace Hazard Conklin.

Brutally frank as a passport photograph.—Irvin S. Cobb.

The evil wind blew like the whisper of a woman.—Lord Dunsany.

About as private as a trolley ride.—New York Evening World.

Long as a bootlegger's calling list.—Detroit Free Press.

A modern college is like a cafeteria—boys select what they want to study.—Glenn Frank.

She looked like a pearl-handled automatic in a velvet case; pretty and dangerous.—Karl Green.

Jolly as a hospital.—John Grierson.

A flapper is like a bungalow; painted in front, shingled in the rear and nothing in the attic.—Richard Henderson.

She has a mind like a framed sentiment to set above an office desk.—Fannie Hurst.

Bores are like dentists' drills.—Aldous Huxley.

Lonely as a revivalist's notion of Heaven.—H. Bedford-Jones.

Nervous as a jellyfish on a Ford fender.—Judge.

A tongue like a horseradish.—Margaret Kennedy.

Depressingly proper as an undertaker's parlor.—Sinclair Lewis.

Commonplace as garters to a bus conductor.—Life.

Liberty, like a latchkey, is most beautiful when we do not possess it.—Robert Lynd.

Conversation should be like high-class lawn tennis. You must take everything that comes over the net—and if any one sends you a stinger, return it harder than it came.—W. B. Maxwell.

Preoccupied as a pig when its trough is filled.—Stephen McKenna.

A sharp, icy blast like a charge of salt from a rifle.—Paul Morand.

Full of bad manners as a Pittsburgh stogie is of burlap.—George Jean Nathan.

Sad eyes that were dimmed like a mirror that has mildewed.—Harvey O'Higgins.

His step is free, as one that hath known wings.—Vida S. Owens.

Refreshing as a Kansas cornfield in full flower.—Bellamy Partridge.

Days, like drops upon a pane, slip and join and go.—Dorothy Parker.

Her smile was as misleading as a detour.—James Powers.

No more effect than another law.—Washington Post.

Flat as the back of a bobbed-haired girl's head.—Will Rogers.

Laughter, like silver bells against the snow.—Margaret E. Sangster.

Useless as a loose tooth.—Paul Sand.

About as thrilling as a phonograph record of a Liberty loan speech.—Robert E. Sherwood.

He looked like a sandwich man without his boards.—Angus Smith.

Small as a night-club dance floor.—New York Sun.

Scarce as an abandoned golf course.—New Orleans Times Picayune.

Red cheeks like varnished apples.—Edith Wharton.

Impersonal as a department store window.—Richard H. Watkins.

No more chance than a crippled grasshopper in a pen of turkeys.—Wayne B. Wheeler.

About as calm and collected as a man with St. Vitus dance walking a tight rope over Niagara Falls in a hurricane.—H. C. Witwer.

He looked like a man who has a favorite aunt in Poughkeepsie and is worried about her asthma.—P. G. Wodehouse.

Necessary as the black squares in a cross-word puzzle.—New York World.—*New York Times.*

Writing for the Pictures

False reputations clog Hollywood and the industry.

The writing end of the business, strange to say, suffers most from this plague.

Local papers and national magazines are plastered with credit to men and women for writing picture stories they had no part in writing.

The real writers, many of them working for small salaries, because they are workers, are totally ignored and people wholly incapable of creative literary work are stealing the glory—and the money.

False statements as to authorship are shown on screens and published in national weeklies and monthlies, the latter supposedly demanding affidavit that all submitted advertising matter tells the truth.

Ethically, this kind of thing is abysmally low. Morally, it is tyrannical in its abuse of authority over workers. Legally, it is a sneer at all sincerity, if not a breach of

the criminal code. Briefly, it is an astounding phase of an American industry, totally un-American in nature, and a child of an alien psychology, ignorant or contemptuous of what America calls a "square deal."

True to its nature, the much-vaunted Czarship of Will Hays utterly fails to reach this "moral issue" of the movies. It is one of many things officially overlooked by the organization blatantly screaming its jealous guardianship of the good repute of the industry—and deliberately trapping a penniless mother (using money as a bait) into an alleged crime.

Humor, it is said, is the saving ingredient of workaday life. The Hays office is no fount of humor. It is, on the other hand, the cause of wide-spread sorrow and misery. Its claim that its functions are general and constructive is not sustained by its actions. It is of no use to the men and women on the payrolls of Hollywood and this includes trained writers who are robbed of the credit earned by their work.

This is not hearsay. Investigation produces specific proof that certain names are being built up as authors of screen stories they did not write, while the real authors grind away at a cheap and laborious job, ignored and unthanked. The fake name goes on the screen and in the public prints.

"Old stuff!" mocked a hard-boiled victim. "It's been going on since the beginning. That statement, made some time ago, made us think. An offer from a widely read monthly for some movie material started our investigation. What we have learned about this fake reputation situation makes us wonder if some supposedly astute movie magnates really rate 12-year-old mentalities.

These men seem to think they can "fool all the people all the time." One of last year's biggest screen successes bears the name of a man who did not write a line of the screened story. "Story by So-and-So" and "Scenario by Such-and-Such" is the usual line. When this is true there is no room for complaint. For the real truth, ask any outstanding scenarist.

It so happens that the outstanding scenarists, with mighty few exceptions, are trained writers, most of them former newspaper men and magazine writers. Calloused by a condition they know they cannot remedy, these experts prepare the screen story, take their substantial pay, and forget it. They are accustomed to "making" famous screen writers. They don't seek glory.

Hollywood, indeed, is a closed reservation, where all the Indians are good Indians, because, if they are not good Indians they are dead Indians, so far as work is concerned. All the professional writers want to work. Here, it's a job. Literary creation is a commodity.

Motion picture writers scenarize their brain children. Only titles require exactitude. Cameras know nothing of diction, though they are tough on punctuation and capitalization. Also, they must have a

story to "shoot" at. And the real creative writer supplies the story. The experts very often care not who gets the credit. This indifference has produced the many false reputations, now becoming a menace to the writers. Some of their "made" authors are outshining them.

The loudly heralded coming of a whole regiment of "Eminent Authors" and their hurried departure after one good look at movie conditions is significant. For, in all the world there is no place where the term "writer" means less than in Hollywood's motion picture field. Of course, this does not apply to the real writers; but it includes an army not one of which served a day's apprenticeship at the art of writing, and who know absolutely nothing about literary construction.

There is a bit of pathos in the conversation of these people. Listening to them, one is prone to wonder how they get that way. They palpably do not know that, back of each really worth-while writer, stretch bleak and hungry years (from five to fifteen) during which the literary aspirants suffered all the pangs of want. They do not know that, in ordinary newspaper work, men work for many years before they attain the honor of the coveted "by" line—before they see their names in print. Most of them never attain it.

These "writers" of Hollywood, facing the apprenticeship of a writer, would turn to something easier; something more generously dotted with regular meals. Nor is there an easier road to literary success. Youngsters now working in scenario departments and called upon to create plots, having no mine of experience from which to draw, must realize that the writing mind is a thing of slow growth. Every good story is but a reflection of the experience of the writer, plus good literary style.

Experience, plus observation, plus the technical skill in literary construction, plus a solid knowledge of the literature of all nations and all time, have a tendency to help make a successful writer. All of the plagiarism committed in the movie field is by people ignorant of literature, current and past. A little knowledge might show them that what they think new is very, very old. Experienced writers rarely plagiarize, because they are familiar with the current literature of the stage and books. One of these was called upon to plagiarize a story of his own, long hidden in a studio vault.

Being a writer seems to be the aim of all of Hollywood's unplaced men and women. Those who have not had actual experience should be very careful with whom they talk. There is no royal road to literary success. And be it known that, to the man or woman inclined that way, success is not measured in money. Literary achievement means all; the material rewards are secondary. In this commercial age this sounds out of tune with things. It is true.

Those who are building literary reputations on the work of writers cannot hope to sustain their stand-

ing. Producers, directors and others who are in a position to falsely put their names on the screen and the bill-boards as authors of stories they did not write must face a day of reckoning. It is the silliest kind of vanity. No literary person would be guilty of it.—*Hollywood Filmograph.*

Women as News Writers

In the hundreds of occupations now open to women the struggle still goes on to prove themselves "people." That they can do some kinds of work quite as well as men, or better, has been demonstrated. But the ardent feminist wants an admission from the world that women are not at a disadvantage in any kind of business. Even when it is not explicitly stated, a feeling of something of this sort underlies many of the articles written by women about the woman who works. Hence it is somewhat surprising and decidedly refreshing to find one woman writer taking quite the opposite view.

Allene Sumner, writing in The Ohio Newspaper, is engaged in newspaper work. She does not consider that she has been hampered because of her sex. On the contrary, she says, "I think the fact of being a girl is much more of an advantage than a handicap in the newspaper world today." But the real point of her story is that things were not ever thus. All newspaper women used to be "girl reporters." Whatever they wrote was headed "Girl Reporter Interviews Murderer," or "Girl Reporter Inspects Subways." If there is a difference between those times and the present, it seems to lie in the increase in "feature writers" of both sexes rather than in any alteration in the attitude toward the women.

Both the public and the editors who make assignments have a not illogical feeling that a woman writer will see any commonplace event from a feminine point of view. How else can feminine eyes look at things? Women were quick to realize the value of emphasizing what difference there might be, and a little school of "sob-sisters" developed. Personalities and names became important because feature stories were signed.

A definition of "feature" would be welcome. Miss Sumner believes that most editors think anything written by a woman is a feature. But it differs from the straight news account in treatment. It is colored with humor, pathos, whimsicality or some other mark of the personality of the writer. Or it may be as simple and direct as plain news, but includes detail and background.

In this kind of work women may have a start on men. If it is an asset to have made the beginning, to have earned a name (one never hears of "sob-brothers") and to feel that the advantage is on their side, they are ahead in the game. And no man will be so ungallant as to deprive them of the honor.—*New York Times.*

Partial Post

An Easy-Going Department for the Brief, Frank and Kindly Exchange of Constructive Comment

Now and then some member of The Writer's Monthly Family has a word to transmit that all the rest of the Folks might well read; so for that purpose this new department has been opened and upon its apparent usefulness its continuance will depend.

ENEMIES AND ENEMIES

I have read with interest, the article "Love Your Enemies," by J. E. Bullard, and I fully agree that it would be better for many writers if they were frankly criticised. However, editors are not masters of the magazines they edit, but are merely paid to follow instructions of the owners. Almost every editorial page has to be subordinate to the business policy and the "ads." Reading matter is used as filler, to induce people to buy the periodical, for when they buy it is reasonable to suppose that they read many of the ads.

It costs more than five cents to transport a large Sunday paper to the reader, yet it is sold for ten cents or less. When this is considered, it is reasonable to believe that any article, however good is taboo if it does not suit the advertiser.

In that respect it does not suit the editorial policy and a person who does not read the "ads." "gets in bad" on the selling end.

This is undoubtedly one of the principal reasons for fiction and for fact-articles being so biased and garbled as they sometimes are. A person has to follow the leader, just like a flock of sheep, or he loses out. No one without great wealth has been able to set aside the ideas of others without a long struggle. Slavery was only discarded in the United States after four years of warfare, when it became known that it did not pay, it was discarded for commercialism.

Dollars and cents plays a big part in acceptance or rejection of manuscripts, and it keeps the editors in many instances from honestly criticizing anyone who they think is powerful enough to make them suffer. Many editors, and authors are in jails and asylums for expressing adverse opinions of others. Many people lose their all for honest, truthful expressions on conditions.

B. YORKSTONE HOGG

Probably the majority of our readers will not agree with the foregoing, but those who do will shout aloud Amen! As we see it, editors are "just folks", and neither more nor less venal than the rest of the world. Still, some of us really ought to be in jail.

Here is a little song in another key:

I see by your March number that a man named Forbes only has 365 opportunities per year. Please be kind enough to send the poor fellow a sample copy of your magazine, and if he subscribes he'll have a million!

Yours For More Opportunities,
I. C. W.

I note with interest that you intend to open a department for controversial matter. It will add considerably to the value of your excellent magazine.

I feel sure that nothing but your policy of avoiding controversy prevented you from pointing out a serious fault and a downright error in the following qua-

train which you recently announced as winning The Writer's Thumbnail Classic Prize:

On pleasure bent, see how the pressing hordes
Flock to the play, where Comedy is queen;
A shot! and Tragedy preempts the boards;
Lincoln alone in an eternal Scene.

Here "hordes" is used in reference to civilized society, and Tragedy is said to *preempt* the boards, when as a matter of fact Comedy was already in possession.

The point seems well taken, for "preempt" is obviously not the word intended.

The same courteous critic writes the following, which may stand or fall on its merits:

The Anapest in the Iambic Pentameter

In the article "The Iambic Pentameter" which appeared in The Writer's Monthly for September (1926) there is a serious mistake. On page 209 it is stated that the anapest may replace the third or fourth foot. This implies that the anapest is inadmissible in the other feet. The truth, however, is that the anapest may take the place of the iambus in any foot. I illustrate from Browning's "Bishop Blougram's Apology", since the author of the article has chosen that poem to prove his point:

Is a life of doubt diversified by faith.
Just when we are safest, there's a sunset touch.
Ciphers and stucco-twiddling everywhere.

In the first line, "Is a life" is an anapest in the first foot; in the second line "we are safe" is an anapest in the second foot and in the third line "everywhere" is an anapest in the fifth foot. And lest the author should claim that "every" may be pronounced as a dissyllable, I cite:

Like Verdi when at his worst opera's end

where "era"s end" is an anapest in the fifth foot, and

We watch while these in equilibrium keep

where again "ium" keep is an anapest in the fifth foot.

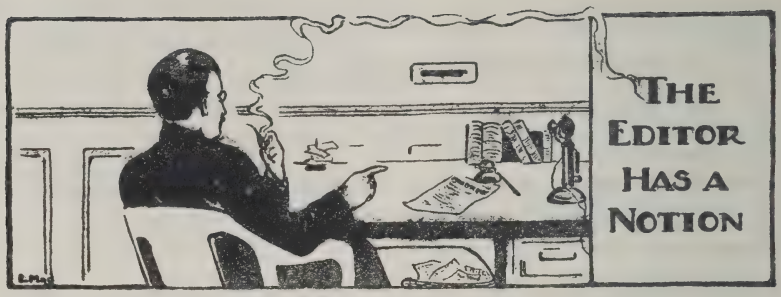
—George Winter Mitchell

The Artist

An artist is an awful man;
He does not do the things he can;
He does the things he cannot do;
And we attend the private view.

Although the world is fair to see,
The artist will not let it be;
He fiddles with the works of God,
And makes them look uncommon, odd.

—From "Poems on Art" by Sir Walter Raleigh



It is good fun to sit on the fence and see the profession go by, (No, that is not a typographical error). And it is especially amusing to observe how heatedly some writers are arguing as they pass along together, while others refuse even to speak to each other. True, their silence is decorous, for the most part, though it must be admitted that now and then the Editor catches sight of some convinced protagonist for an idea covertly making faces at those who disagree with him, and—oh, very rarely—some literary bad boy will thumb his nose at another who either does not see him or refuses to take notice. It is all a part of the *comedie humaine.*

The historic instances of great, century-lasting schisms that have come from trifling differences are many, but there have been many more that are not generally known. Over in Pennsylvania they tell of a new religious denomination shooting off from the unfriendly parent stem due to anger growing out of a horse trade. In Iowa, tradition says, the state in years gone by went overwhelmingly Democratic because a United States Senator sold out his party due to jealousy over a woman. In California, so say the gossips, a quarrel over game-cocks developed into a half-billion dollar business wrangle, the end of which is not yet. Isn't it odd? One little tick may produce a tremendous lump.

Why should people who really have no decent reason for disliking each other allow the acid of hate to give them spiritual rheumatism? And particularly, why should those who essay to write for the public prints take such manifest delight in sinking the gaff into their opponents as writers now and again do?

There are two kinds of men in the world: those who think that they can change human nature, and those who know that it can't be done. So the Editor does not cherish the notion that any words of his can in the slightest degree alter the trait just noted. The only thing we can do is to give heated argufiers time to cool off. Time is a great emollient, and to keep silent long enough to listen to the

other fellow attentively is the best mental ice-pack yet devised.

No, we can't change human nature, but now and then we can separate the quarrelsome. And here, in THE WRITER'S MONTHLY, is established a neutral territory on which there shall be no guerrilla warfare, or even back-fence squabbles.

But the Editor has a notion that he used a fighting term when he wrote those words, "neutral territory"! Alas, how much fighting has grown out of trying to neutralize parts of Nicaragua! Our national Senators hesitate over engaging bodily in the fray in Central America, but the casualty list in Washington is terrifying. That which was once a dignified law-making body has become a gladiators' club, and the chief occupation of most of the toga wearers seems to see how great a rumpus may be kicked up within the shortest space of time. If only they would slaughter each other in actuality, what a peaceful time we should have!

It is to be hoped that the great craft of writers will not descend to the sensational level and waste valuable energies in disputation. There are so many constructive things to be written that it seems a thousand pities to squander such opportunities, to make way for mere destructive criticism. What could not the Press accomplish if for a single year all were to unite in spreading up-building propaganda! But of course that would be to hope for an immediate Millennium.

And this is not a namby-pamby sentiment. It is simply conservation. War is a waste, and so is vitriolic argument. Vituperation never unveiled a single truth except the pitiful futility of such a method. We need argument; betimes even battle is necessary; but is there not a vast difference between argumentation and a pitched conflict? Someone once said that a righteous people will love peace so much that they will go to war to win that peace. It is true. But how often is it true? And is the principle ever applicable to intellectual differences?

Probably the greatest crystallizations of truth have always come after turbulence. A stirring up is necessary in all life if society in the mass or any man in particular is not to sink into inertia. Disputation brings out the truth, now and then, but exposition and persuasion are forces both nobler and more effective. After all, it is the spirit of a man that makes him quarrelsome and not the size of his knuckles.

Many a writer has by a bellicose attitude alienated those who could be useful to him. More than that—who might become friends. It is noble to be brave, but what good purpose does it serve for one to knock off every chip he sees on passing shoulders? Get a reputation for being too ready to brawl and even your ardent supporters will turn cold.

The truth is that the over-argumentative mind is a dissipated mind. When it becomes really necessary to fight there is no en-

ergy left—it has all gone out in little spurts of uncontrolled anger. Repression spells power. When the compressed energy of a self-controlled mind explodes, look out!

The Editor often receives answers to statements made by writers in these pages. Some are witty, courteous and good-tempered; others are as acid as the morning after. Hitherto it has been the policy of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY to decline to print these answers even when in one or more particulars the points of criticism seemed well taken. Our reason for assuming this position has been that most replies lead to rejoinders, and they in turn to surrejoinders, with a result that tends to boredom for all but the disputants.

A consideration that buttressed the foregoing reason is this: Mostly, the points criticised are either matters of opinion or of locality, and it seems unprofitable to the great body of our readers to arouse discussion that can only air one-sided views.

But there is another sort of communication which the Editor has always hankered to put in print, and that is the concise, well-phrased, good-tempered note calling attention to some error, oversight, or other point in an article that should be corrected or further developed in the interest of accuracy — a note that scores its points fairly, temperately and kindly, and then stops.

So with this issue of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY we throw open a new brief department called "Partial Post." In the page or two that can be spared for this venture we shall from time to time print short letters from our readers, and in doing so the following rules will be observed:

1. No long letters will be considered.
2. No matters of mere opinion will be admitted.
3. No ill temper or denunciation will be tolerated.
4. No communications will be returned or answered personally.
5. No honorariums will be paid.

It will of course be understood that the scope of these short letters must be strictly within the purview of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY—helpfulness to those who write.

The Editor has a notion that if our readers cooperate cheerfully to make "Partial Post" a success, a good time—as the country reporter no longer says—will be had by all.

Definitions

Free verse is the triumph of mind over meter.—*Life.*

A literary critic is a person who can find a meaning in literature that the author didn't know was there.—*Cleveland Times.*

An epigram is a short pithy saying set to music on the typewriter when the mind of the typist is in a state of scintillation.—OWEN MCDERMOTT.

Contributions to Experience Meeting are welcomed and payment is made in the form of subscriptions to the magazine. Contributions should not be more than 300 words, because of space limitations. Since unavailable manuscript cannot be returned, carbon copies should be kept.

Quiller Couch, the English novelist, evidently regards authorship as "a good bargain." This he gives as his experience: "My calling ties me to no office stool, makes me no man's slave, compels me to no action that my soul condemns. It sets me free from town life, which I loathe, and allows me to breathe clean air, to exercise limbs as well as brain, to tread good turf, and wake up every morning to the sound and smell of the sea and that wide prospect which, to my eyes, is the dearest in the earth. All happiness must be purchased with a price, though people seldom recognize this; and part of the price is that, thus living, a man can never amass a fortune. But as it is extremely unlikely that I could have done it in any pursuit, I may claim to have the better of the bargain."

The following interesting question was put to G. K. Chesterton by an interviewer in the Boston Transcript: "Would you be willing to tell me what part of your life contributed most to your career?"

The answer was as prompt as it was surprising: "Those years before I was twenty. Most of my best ideas came to me before I was out of my teens." His wife challenged the statement, but when Mr. Chesterton cited the instances of the ideas then germinated and later used, she added her voice of approval. "Even now," said Mr. Chesterton, "I keep going back in my thoughts to that time, digging up ideas I had then, and finding them good—indeed, better than many I have had since. At the present time I am working on a book the idea of which came to me when I was about eighteen."

Was he precocious or typical? What would you say?—J. E. W.

In my third number of The Writer's Monthly came the article by Neil Farmer: "A Colyumist Twice Every Fortnight". Acting upon his suggestion and with absolutely no experience along that line, I submitted a column to a local paper which promptly refused it. The second paper gave me a better reception and decided to try

me out for a month. The column has now been running for nine months and has proven a great benefit to both the paper and myself, due much to the generous remarks made about it and quotations used from it by the columnist of a large daily in a nearby city. My salary, as Mr. Farmer warned the would-be "colyumist", is small, but aside from the monthly check and the publicity it has brought, it has keyed me up. I am always on the alert for column stuff; an odd bit of news, an obscure bit of local history, a clever saying, a quotation from a new book or an old one. It brought a $100.00 job my way in a community where such jobs are rare, in the compiling of a county number of a local magazine, and last, but not least, it has made firm friends for me in the county and opened up other avenues. Local advertisers are beginning to come to me for help; they think my paragraphs have a certain degree of "punch" that they want for their ads and they are willing to pay for it.

Last September I asked to be allowed to write the children's page for a diocesan paper which is published monthly. No salary is attached to that work but the good derived from having to produce at regular intervals has been a great aid to my progress as it is bound to do in the case of any beginner, and in going after other things I find both the column and the children's page give me a definite background that is most valuable.—N. C. W.

Fawcett Publications, Robbinsdale, Minn., write that for True Confessions they want first person tales of romance and marriage—*usually told by girls.* They want no episodes in them that would tend to loosen the moral fibre of youthful readers. The word limit is 5,500. They ask contributors to Triple-X Pioneer Stories to remember that it is a *man's magazine.* Adventure — its action, conflict, dangers, suspense, drama—must predominate. They report on manuscripts the speediest of any publication I have ever tried.

Free Press Prairie Farmer, Winnipeg, Can., pay better than do most weekly farm papers. For fillers and columns they give two-thirds cent per word. They pay at the end of the month following publication.

Our Dumb Animals, Boston, solicits compelling articles relating to animals and birds. They require brief, concise prose of about 300 words, in rare instances up to 800. Very little poetry is used, and that from 4 to 16 lines. Good photographs are always in demand, whether with or without text. They ask contributors to bear in mind that their pages are few and their columns short.—E. M. J.

Rust Craft, Boston, returned a few greeting card verses of mine with the following points which they advised every verse writer to follow: 1. The Verse Must Read Smoothly. 2. It must have an Idea brought to a Clear Point, that stands out at the First Reading. 3. It must contain a Greeting. 4.

If it fulfills all these requirements, the editor can more easily decide whether he needs it.

What To Do, Elgin, Illinois, sends out a clear and concise pamphlet for all writers who are interested in children's stories, describing what to write for these publications. It is free for the asking.

The Curiosity Box, a department of House Beautiful, Boston, pays from $1.00 to $3.00 for brief contributions which "contain definite information about ingenious devices or helpful discoveries about the house, its planning, its equipment, or its running."

This magazine also has another department called "How I Did It". In this, articles telling how you have made your home more convenient or attractive, are especially desired. They will pay $5.00 for articles of 300 to 450 words and $25.00 for illustrated articles of 1000 to 1500 words. Their reply has, in my own experience, been very prompt.—T. C. W.

The fiction editor of Pictorial Review explained to me the other day that their policies concerning fiction have changed somewhat. They used to feature the "strong" story—sharp struggle frequently involving tragedy. Now they are avoiding the morose and tragic, and trying to get lighter and more sophisticated stories, also shorter ones, between four and five-thousand words. I do not know whether the change is permanent or merely tentative, since it has not been caused by a change of editors. The editors feel that the magazine is addressed primarily to the woman in the home—the type, to make it concrete, who would have two or three small children and do her own work. It is hardly geared to the level of the college graduate, yet should appeal to intelligent people. Its motto both for fiction and for non-fiction is "to amuse, entertain and instruct." By "instruct" is meant, in the fiction field, to give the reader a better idea of life. A recent issue carries a story with hardly any plot at all—a study of a child that is being wrongly brought up. The story does not need to point the moral. It is handled with humor and penetrating analysis.—M. S. M.

I have on my desk a letter from a woman asking how I write and sell my greeting-card verses. She is discouraged because she has only sold two verses this year and wants to know what is the matter with her verses. She enclosed several samples. I have just written her that there is nothing the matter with her rhymes; the trouble lies in being discouraged. There may be a few souls who can live on the money they receive for verse, but the average person should realize that competition is keen. The greeting-card market is flooded with contributions, and the editors say that most of them are poor. The fact remains that many of them are good, but no better than others; and when one can pick from a full barrel of apples it is human nature to take the biggest and shiniest of the crop. Then, too, editors differ one from another. In

sending greeting verses to firms I know, I am often surprised at the verses they take, or return. In my experience, it *is* harder to sell greetings than formerly. This is due to over-crowding of the market, to the fact that several of the reliable firms have given up personal and counter cards and only use formal sentiments, and again to the fact that several firms have merged with others.

Some recent bits of information I have had may interest others.

Bunde & Upmeyer Co., Milwaukee, writes: "Not at the present time." Louis F. Bockmann, Bockmann Co., Chicago, accepted a verse selected from a number sent to Master Craft. Bockmann's and Master Craft are separate concerns, but Mr. Bockmann is on the art committee of Master Craft, so there seems to be a close affiliation.

Bockmann Co. wrote requesting Christmas verses in the late fall.

Holmes Co., Chicago, do not use Mother cards.

Murray Co., and Stanley are two of the firms which have discontinued their line of verse greetings.

Buzza Co., Minneapolis, Minn., recently returned some Christmas verses and said they were interested in Easter and Birthday verses at this time.

Mr. Minto J. Henderson is no longer connected with Henderson Co., having sold out his interest. Some cards sent to him were returned with this information, also the suggestion: "Write to Gibson Co." I suppose this means that Mr. Henderson is now connected with that firm.

Cards sent to Old Giftcrafters last September have not been heard from, nor have I had an answer to my letter of inquiry sent in November.

Keating Card Co. bought two prose Business Greetings from me, but returned some verses.

It just amounts to this, in my estimation — Keep your verses in the mails. Send with regularity, but not too often, to each individual firm. I have sold hundreds of verses during the last few years, but if I had been discouraged by rejections I would have had few returns. Keep every scrap of information about the dates as to when different firms are in the market. If a firm writes me, "Thanks, not in the market for six months," they hear from me in six months.—E. L. S.

A tip in the "Where to Sell" section of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY just brought me a neat little check from the Southwest Merchant Economist and Drygoodsman, St. Louis, Missouri.

The article was a simple write-up of a Christmas advertising circular used by a neighborhood store. In sending the check, the Associate Editor, Mr. Willsford, asked me to try them also on other needs, enclosing a list of their present wants. This publication pays on acceptance, and the prompt and courteous treatment accorded by these people is mighty gratifying.

Although my regular work does not permit me to turn out finished articles every day, I do, nevertheless, keep constantly at it; and I

find that the more I send out, the more readily are the articles accepted. The Inland Printer, Chicago, for instance, after having rejected an article a few months ago, wrote me a pleasing letter (signed by the Associate Editor, Mr. Heir) about another article I had recently sent them, saying that it was accepted and would appear in an early issue.—C. C.

The Household Magazine, Topeka, Kansas, pays five dollars each for the best three letters for their page "Around the Family Table." A subject is announced each month. A good poem on the subject is sometimes printed also. By the way, this is a good magazine for amateurs to subscribe for (the price being only twenty-five cents a year), as they also want last lines for limericks and cover titles. Five dollars is given for the best recipe or household hint received each month and one dollar for any they consider good enough to print. Each issue also contains several seasonal poems, and the articles themselves are an inspiration if one is at all interested in home life.—M. A. K.

M. L., who suggests turning an old phonograph-record or player-roll cabinet into a "cheerful home for manuscripts", certainly has a charming idea, but it doesn't fit my needs at all, because I have absolutely no room for a manuscript-file of that kind. I am using the large box letter-files, arranging the stories alphabetically, and using different files for the stories that have been adopted by various magazines, and those which are still wanderers. When an Editor writes a personal letter—either of acceptance or rejection—it is clipped to my copy of the manuscript, so that I have all the data concerning a story or article with the manuscript itself, which—for me—is the easiest way to file correspondence.

Someone mentions the advisability of having a rubber stamp with your name and address, and I should like to add that if you should move to another town it isn't necessary to have an entirely new stamp made. Your stationer will alter the address easily.

I have had the same trouble in locating a publisher willing to consider a book of short-stories for children that W. B. B. mentions, and also, being a librarian in a children's room myself, I know that children are very fond of certain types of books of short stories. In fact, some children, when I recommend a book I am sure would appeal to them, always meet me with the question, "Is it a whole long story?" and when I am obliged to admit that it is, they usually select some book with what they call "little" stories. But as to publishers, if I remember rightly, E. P. Dutton & Co., (New York) has published one or two of the most popular books of short stories for children, and most of the books from P. F. Volland Company (Chicago) which I have seen are along that line. I have also seen books of this sort from Milton Bradley, (Springfield, Mass.) and Minton Balch & Company (New York).—H. E. W.

Today's Humor, 1112 North Boulevard, Oak Park, Illinois,

whose requirements are for short humorous verse, evidently do not believe in the usual "enclosed envelope" policy. For, despite the fact that I enclosed an envelope of suitable size with my last submission, they discarded it in favor of one of their own which was far too small. So small, in fact, that the sheets were wrinkled and crumpled beyond further possibility of use. Then, too, they required thirty three days in which to report.

The Filling Station and Petroleum Marketer, P. O. Box No. 562, Tulsa, Oklahoma, sends upon request an interesting statement of editorial needs. In addition, it mails out letters at various times regarding requirements for some particular issue.—R. A. B.

I am a great believer in the mail-order catalogues for finding accurate material that would be difficult to obtain anywhere else. Not so very long ago I was asked by an editor of a farm paper to write an article on "The Farm Workshop and Forge." Where was I to get the material? Farm workshops were distant, I thought, and forges were subjects I knew little about! The mail-order catalogue, after consideration, solved the problem, and very well, for after the article was published a well known manufacturer became interested in the article, seeing in it an opportunity to manufacture and furnish quite a farmer's workshop outfit at a reasonable price. I was asked for a statement as to the tools that a farmer's workshop should include, specifying sizes of the different tools as near as practicable. —W. H. F.

Although I have had a few stories and poems published, my greatest success in writing has been in the newspaper field. I shall pass on to others, who may be in the same work, some things that have been helpful to me.

The Baltimore Sun, Baltimore, Md., in rejecting an article, wrote, "Your article on the old church is not available at this time but it is so well written that I am asking you to send me more of your articles. I might suggest that you query us on anything you have in mind, as in that way you can at least save the labor of writing things which we know in advance we will not be able to use."

I immediately replied giving them a list of subjects and soon afterwards received an order for several articles.

In sending a birthday anniversary article on a famous living artist to the Washington Star, it was returned with this notice from the editor, "Where is he now and how will he spend the day? That is what the public wants to know. Send back." I immediately found out the required information, revised my article, and had it accepted.—G. B. P.

Considering the length of articles used, and the price paid for each one, the rates of the two following markets are very satisfactory.

Spare-Time Money Making, 230 Fifth Av., New York City, pays five dollars each for letters outlining some practical way of earning

money. Of course, the method must be unusual enough to merit publication. No length for the letters is mentioned, but the editor evidently prefers the shorter ones as most of those used contain only a few hundred words. Payment is made about the time of publication, and a copy of the issue is sent to contributors.

Opportunity Magazine, 750 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, pays five dollars for the best short article published each month in the "Now, This Is My Idea—" department of the magazine. Other articles that are printed are awarded prizes of two dollars each. The subject is to be chosen by the writer, but the articles must concern direct door-to-door selling. This is a salesman magazine, and nothing except direct selling material is desired. Two to three-hundred word articles are used chiefly, but the length is far less important than the idea. Articles must interest the salesman-reader. Pays on or before publication.

Both of these markets are regular monthly departments, and once the writer understands exactly the type of material required, he may place many short articles.

Furthermore, both magazines offer excellent chances to branch out from these departments into the regular pages of reading matter. Secure copies of these magazines and examine them closely. They hold many opportunities for the writer.—G. M. D.

Farm and Orchard, published as a Sunday agricultural supplement by the Times-Mirror Co., of Los Angeles, pay twenty-five cents an inch, space rate, and one dollar, for photographs, and mails payment early in the month following publication. They promptly return unavailable material.

In a former number of The Writer's Monthly, Mr. J. E. Bullard gave a suggestion for numbering manuscripts. Having adapted his advice to my own needs, I now copy from the card in my filing system the number of the returned manuscript on the outside of the returned envelope, leaving the manuscript inside to prevent its being soiled and creased by repeated handling. The envelopes, numbers up, are dropped into a long cardboard shoe box. When I am ready to send out returns on another journey I look through my card file, select subjects, and then search for the same number on the outside of the envelopes. When the manuscripts are again mailed, the old envelopes are destroyed.

A friend gave me a discarded spool cabinet, such as are used in notion departments of stores. Mine has eight shallow drawers and a space under the top reached by raising one-half the top which is secured with hinges. In this space I keep certain business letters. The shallow drawers hold envelopes of various sizes, post cards, stamps, letter paper, typewriter and carbon paper, scratch paper and second sheets, and sold manuscripts. This little cabinet standing beside my typewriter table, is an invaluable addition to my work equipment.—M. U.

The Word Page

"School" is derived from a Greek word signifying leisure, and in some institutions the meaning seems not to have changed! A "scholar" in olden days meant a man who was able to take time from other pursuits, such as government, war, or the management of his estate, to devote himself to learning. Latterly we think of a scholar as one of bookish attainments. Incidentally, it should be remembered that not all pupils are students, and that not all students attain to scholarship; there are definite distinctions to be observed here, although coloquially the three words are used interchangeably.

The Arabic word for sugar-cane is *qand,* hence our word "candy". However, the origin of the Arab word may be traced back to Persia and India. French words of the same origin are *candi,* and *sucre candi,* from the latter of which we got our Scottish "sugar candy".

"Sweets" has a broad meaning. In general, it applies to anything edible that is sweet to the taste, but our British brothers apply it most frequently to a sweet dish for dessert. Americans more frequently use "sweets" to mean confectionery and heavily sugared preserved fruits. The British "sweeties", for confections, used chiefly in speaking to children, has come into slang use here—with a personal flavor!

The word "county" comes to us from the old feudal times, and meant originally the domain of a count. Of course its origin, so far as we are concerned in America, is English.

Grace Moncrieff Miller writes thus of the shift of words from the Saxon form to the Norman French when William the Conqueror in 1066 A. D., conquered England:

"Consequent upon the Norman rule over the Saxons, as long as an animal was in the care of the serf [who was of course a native of the conquered island, and not of the invading nation], it was known by the Saxon name, but, when it was prepared as meat for the table of the lords, it acquired a French name. Hence 'ox' became 'beef' (*boeuf*); 'calf' became 'veal' (*veau*); 'sheep' became 'mutton' (*mouton*); 'pig' became 'pork' (*porc*). Thus, at different periods, have words been changed or modified in meaning, and new words invented to meet new needs."

When the Writer Reads

A Compendium of Compound Words

To the compiler of this small book, P. O. Landon, we are indebted for a very helpful volume. It is a list, practically complete, of compound and hyphenated compound words for authors, editors, printers, proof readers and stenographers.

Every person who writes is often in doubt whether a given compound should be hyphenated or typed as one word. The dictionary is cumbersome to handle as compared with this little book, which we cordially recommend to every writer. P. O. Landen, 3816 Third St., Des Moines, Iowa.

Chambers' Biographical Dictionary

The latest "Who's Who", or even a file of those reference books, cannot in the slightest degree take the place of a good biographical dictionary, useful as the former sort of volume unquestionably is. Neither can great encyclopedias such as The Americana or The Britannica, for these general reference works must cover too many subjects to admit of their giving space to all the persons who have been in the public eye, about whom the journalist, the publicist, the writer, and other persons in similar callings wish to have accurate data. All the "little Somebodies" and every "great Nobody" must be included in such a reference work, besides the really big fellows of all past time; and we know of no other compendious work that even approaches this desideratum as does Chambers' Biographical Dictionary. It contains more than 1000 closely printed pages of fine but perfectly legible type, and comprises well over 10,000 biographies. It is, as needs be, a model of condensation, and its ample references to authority make further study of any biographical subject practicable. Though the editors of the revised edition are—as were all the earlier editors — British, prominent Americans are adequately represented, though of course one must not look for lesser personalities of today.

This valuable work forms a part of "Lippincott's Reader's Reference Library", which has several times had favorable notice in this Monthly. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, Penna.

The Writer's Monthly

A Journal for All Who Write

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IMPORTANT NOTICES

Change of address must reach the publishers before the fifteenth of the month preceding issue, otherwise no number can be duplicated. Subscribers must give old address when sending in the new, specifically addressing the notice to The Writer's Monthly.

Return postage must accompany all regular articles intended for publication.

In no case can short items for the Departments be returned if unavailable.

Notice of accepted material will be sent promptly with payment on acceptance. However, items for "Experience Meeting" will be paid for only in shorter or longer subscriptions to *The Writer's Monthly*, to be sent to any desired person. Items of news will not be paid for.

Vol. XXIX May No. 5

The first disciplines of life are those that teach us the limitations of our own wills, but it takes us a long time to learn that we cannot always presently do what we want in a particular field. The general truth we accept, but every so often a new moon swims into view for us to reach after, and then we need to be taught all over again that aspiration is not the only preliminary to attainment.

And it is a very good thing that we are chronic reachers; and equally a good thing that we must often fall short of our aim—else where were ambition; and without a fixed ambition what would challenge us to effort?

The writer who has it in him to be worthy of the name is an incorrigible aspirant, and that is good; but he is much like the rest of the world in that he is prone to yearn toward the heights without taking into account the intervening foothills. "Intervening"—ah, there is a word! The things that come between, and how we view them, with what spirit we essay to tunnel, or pass around, or surmount, or remove them—these are the factors that count.

But this is not a preachment; it has to do with such never-uneventful commonplaces as rejection slips, and their sources. A manuscript goes out to a magazine of the highest reputation in its field—and comes back. Then to the next three or four in its general class. Discouragement—and a dark corner of the desk drawer. "If I can't get into the best magazines it must be because I can't write—for I will not write for any but the best."

Very worthy, and very unpractical; and there are two distinct sides to the unpracticality. In the first place, what a writer is not able to do today he may by effort, intelligent effort, be able to compass a year hence. Secondly, he may attain to the best by way of the lesser.

Now the lesser, mind you, need not be the unworthy, and this applies as fully to the magazines as it does to what a writer may be producing. "Oh," says someone, "that's adventure stuff," or, "Western stuff." It will surprise some

writers who live on Rittenhouse Square or Beacon Hill or Shaughnessy Heights to learn that the adventure and Western and lesser women's magazines, not to mention others that the narrow-minded high-brow brushes aside with an implied if not actually snorted snort, now and then publish stories that are truly literature. To magazine men and to widely-read critics this is only a truism, but the fact must be iterated and reiterated before it will be believed—and even then not broadly.

The sum of the matter is that it is folly to ignore the lesser markets, for they are the foot-hills to the sierras.

The passing years have a happy trick of de-Philistinizing many a mind.

Roe Fulkerson says, "Public opinion is what most people think; but," he adds, "most people don't think."

The epigram raises the question of whether the voice of the people really is the voice of God. At least we can all agree that it is when it is the voice of thinking people. The unfortunate thing is that thinkers are prone to silence.

It is not quite fair to denounce a writer because he writes as he does. Perhaps he is as wistful for the unattained as those who boldly profess their devotion to the ideal.

Newspapermen would not grudge women the pipe if out of it they could draw as many good ideas as the case-hardened old space writers have sucked out of their charred briars. Pipe-smoking may yet become the solace of women writers, and not merely the fad of certain of the "smart" set. But we do not venture to advise it—partly because mere men no longer advise the stronger sex.

It is the cynic who says that truth is a stranger to fiction.

It is all very well to watch which way the wind blows and trim our sails accordingly, but it is well to remember that auxiliary schooners are independent of the wind.

A good correspondent is one who writes that which does not come back, but brings a satisfactory reply.

Writers who long for the contacts of the great publishing centers may forget that such contacts are often distracting. It is an odd commentary on life and its contradictions that the city writer looks yearningly toward the small town or the country where he may find time and space to think and feel the things that are too often choked in the smoke of the metropolis and drowned out in its ceaseless clangor. The writer must learn to be in spirit where he would be, wherever his body may be anchored for the time. It is the triumphant function of the imagination that it can be—must be—trained to transport us whither we wish.

H. C. S. Folks

Irving T. MacDonald, Springfield, Mass., is the author of "Hoi-Ah!" a lively story for boys based upon "Andy Carroll's First Year at Holy Cross". The book is illustrated, and is published by Benziger Brothers. The sequel to this book, "Schooner Ahoy", has also been brought out recently by the same publishers. The theme of this novel for boys is "Holy Cross Boys with the Cape Cod Fishing Freight". Mr. MacDonald is producing two volumes a year for Benziger Brothers.

The December issue of Music Trades Magazine carried "Musical Instruments Have Inspired Many Painters", by Catherine Beach Ely, New York, and the November-December Country Homes Magazine (Baltimore, Md.) printed "The Kind of Home I Would Like to Own", also by Miss Ely.

The Lake Charles American Press (Lake Charles, La.) has recently printed several stories under the title of "Chips", by L. L. Harris, Lake Charles. Some of these stories were anonymous, and some were signed by the author. Mr. Harris is also author of "Human Side Up, at a West Louisiana Auction", which appeared in the Sunday Magazine Section of the January 9 issue of The New Orleans Times-Picayune, and "I Don't Want You" in the January 19 issue of the Lake Charles American Press.

"Pioneer Periodicals of the Canadas" by Constance K. Sissons, Toronto, Canada, appeared in Willisons Monthly (Toronto).

Ella Shannon Bowles, Franconia, N. H., is the author of a book, "Hand Made Rugs", which is being published by the Atlantic Monthly Press (Boston).

The March number of Home Friend Magazine (Kansas City) contained a story, "Featuring Marishka", by Elizabeth Thayer, Bethlehem, Pa.

Helena Caperton, Richmond, Va., is the author of "An American Debutante at Buckingham Palace", in the Peoples Home Journal for August, and "The Jacquelin Taylor House" in The Spur for November.

"Pohogonut" by Allan Keniston, Vineyard Haven, Mass., appeared in the January issue of Field and Stream.

"The Sorrel Shadow" by James W. Egan, Tacoma, Wash., appeared in the first March issue of Ace-High Magazine.

Marion J. Delaney, Fabens, Texas, had an article entitled "Raising Cotton with a Tractor" in the March issue of Ford-Power Age.

The March issue of Cowboy Stories contained a poem by S. Omar Barker, Beulah, New Mexico, entitled "A Puncher's Protest".

Elizabeth Jane Black, of Wilmington, N. C., is conducting a department called "The Clanogram" in The Morning Star (Wilmington, N. C.). This department is devoted to Scottish affairs. Two poems by Miss Black, "Twa Old Spoons" and "The Torch Bearer" have been many times reprinted.

Guilty Ones Escape—"Innocent Novelist Jailed as Swindler." It is too bad that some of the guilty ones can't be jailed on the same charge.—New York Evening Post.

Also Radio Bed-time Stories—A skull three quarters of an inch thick has been found in America. Now we know who invented the first motion picture plot.—Punch, London.

Among those Present—A reporter, having been assigned to talk with an American millionaire on an important question, was repeatedly refused admission to the house of the great man. The ambitious journalist sought out a senator who was a personal friend of the millionaire, and petitioned his aid.

Armed with the senator's card he returned to the home of the millionaire, and sent in his talisman. This time he was admitted.

"Young man," said the millionaire, "do you know that sixteen reporters have called on me today, and I have refused to see them all?"

"I ought to know it sir," responded the young man, for I am the whole sixteen."—John J. Fisher.

Not a Bad One Either—Riffle: Who wrote the first crime-story?

Piffle: I think it was a Spanish writer, Sallie Manca; the title is "Columbus and the Yegg."—R. S. V. P.

"And Why My 'Best'?"—Gay Reportorial Applicant (to former boss): When are you going to shoot your best man and phone for me: create an opening, you know?

City Editor: That depends on the size of the opening.—Ray W. Frohman.

Geometrical Progression—"My next novel?" repeated the author. "It's going to be about a rounder who is involved in a triangle. He pretends to be on the square, but in his own sphere everyone knows he is all on the surface. The other man is many-sided, but withal obtuse, despite his solid qualities. I think it will be a book on an entirely different plane."—Saturday Evening Post.

History As It Is Wrote—The history lesson was nearing its end, and the master thought it time to see whether the pupils had benefited by his instruction.

"Now, boys," said he, "can anybody tell me something about Henry VIII?"

One small boy rose.

"Yes, sir," he said. "He ironed his clothes on Anne Boleyn!"

"Hum!" exclaimed the master. "Are you trying to be funny, child?"

"No, sir," was the answer. "It says he did in my book. Listen! I'll read it out."

And in a firm voice he read the following sentence aloud:

"Henry VIII pressed his suit on Anne Boleyn.'"—Answers.

Where to Sell

Every endeavor is made to secure accurate information regarding markets, but no guarantee is given of accuracy, nor is any responsibility assumed for operations based upon information given. Our readers are urgently asked to send information of new markets, suspensions, and prize contests.

PRIZE CONTESTS

The Sixth annual **Alvan T. Simonds Economic Contest** offers a first prize of $1000, and a second prize of $500 for the best essays on the subject: "Who ultimately Pays the Taxes?" The essays should be written in a popular style, to interest "the man on the street", the average person as well as the technical. They should not be less than 3000 words nor over 5000 words in length. The essays must be written in English, and preferably written on one side of the paper only. An assumed name should be at the head of each sheet. A sealed envelope, with the assumed name on the outside and containing the real name and address, should accompany each essay submitted. The essays must be original and not previously published, and must not be published nor used in any similar contest before the prizes in this contest are awarded. The prize-winning essays and the copyrights of them shall become the property of the donor upon payment of the prizes. Contest closes December 31, 1927. All communications should be addressed to the Contest Editor, Simonds Saw and Steel Company, 470 Main St., Fitchburg, Mass. No essays will be returned. Receipt of essays cannot be acknowledged. Contestants can make sure of delivery by registration.

The Reg. N. Boxer Company, Ltd., New Toronto, Canada, offer $1000 in cash prizes for slogans. For the best ten words (or less) in the English language which will most appropriately express the beautiful designs and colors of Maximur Wall Papers, the following prizes will be given: $500 for the best slogan; $250 for the second best; $125 for the third best; $75 for the fourth best, and $50 for the fifth best. If the homes of any or all prize winners are found to be decorated with Maximur Wall Papers their prize money will be automatically doubled. Official entry blank and folder giving full particulars may be obtained from wall paper dealers. Contest closes May 31, 1927.

Industrial Psychology Monthly will give an award of $100 in gold, and an Honorable Mention with $20 in gold for the best articles upon morale. The award will be preferably for a description of an actual experiment in developing morale; otherwise it will be given for the statement of a plan for such development. Morale is here considered as the mobilization of enthusiasm, interest, and energy on behalf of carrying out a corporate purpose. The emphasis is upon methods of cultivating group cohesion, progressive loyalty, *esprit de corps.* An individual or a group may submit proposals. The award is open to all competitors. Favor will be given to new workers in the field, all other things being equal. Reports should be typewritten, triple spaced, of about 3000 words in length, and written in an interesting, practical, straightforward way for the business man. Each report is to be submitted

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Katharine Newlin Burt

—best known for "Quest" (her sixth novel), and stories in "Red Book," "Cosmopolitan," "Harper's," "Country Gentleman." . . . "McCall's" will publish three stories of spiritual interest by Mrs. Burt this year.

MUST you write and rewrite . . . and when your story has come back, still rewrite? Trying to make those characters other than thin, spineless little ghosts. To make them alive, warm, complete!—doing dramatic things naturally and with a feeling. Mary, for instance, going plausibly with a white, mocking face to the well and dropping a shining object into the soundless water . . . and old Miriam spying so!

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under a pseudonym of three words. Accompanying each report will be a sealed envelope containing the key to the pseudonym. The judges reserve the right to publish all reports submitted. The report winning the gold award will be published in the January, 1928, issue of Industrial Psychology Monthly. Contest closes October 1, 1927. Questions and contestants' reports should be directed to Morale Secretary, Industrial Psychology Monthly, Hamilton, N. Y.

Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia, offers $10,000 in prizes for Chamber Music Compositions. First prize, $5000; second prize, $3000; third prize, $2000. For compositions for from 3 to 6 instruments, the piano may be included as one of the instruments. Any composer may submit more than one composition and be awarded more than one prize. Any composer may submit compositions for the first prize only, if he so desires. The competition is open to persons of both sexes and of all nationalities. Both Score and Parts must be sent, each score must have written on its title page in ink, a nom de plume and be accompanied by a sealed envelope containing a paper with the composer's name and address inside and the nom de plume on the outside. The name or the address of the composer must not appear elsewhere. The contest closes December 31, 1927, by which time all compositions must be in the hands of the Society. For further details write to the Secretary, 407 Sansom Street, Philadelphia, Penna.

People's Popular Monthly, Des Moines, Iowa, will award $10,000 in cash prizes for clean stories. $5000 will be awarded for first American serial rights of the best story between 60,000 and 80,000 words in length. $5000 will be paid in ten prizes of $500 each for first American rights of the ten best short stories between 6,000 and 10,000 words in length. All manuscripts that are to be returned must be accompanied by return postage, and should be plainly marked "Prize Story Contest." All stories must be clean and wholesome. The winning stories will be selected by the editors of People's Popular Monthly. Every story will be read as soon as received. Stories not satisfactory to the editors will be returned at once. Authors of all stories especially attractive to the editors will receive a prompt purchase offer and story may still compete for prizes. All stories must reach the editor's office in Des Moines, on or before October 1st, 1927. Cash prizes will be paid as soon after October 1st as the manuscripts can be judged.

The Power Transmission Association will make an award of $250 for the best slogan and emblem design which is received at the association's headquarters in the Drexel Building, Philadelphia, Penna., on or before June 5, 1927. The winning award and its author will be announced at the convention of the National Industrial Advertisers' Association, Cleveland, June 13-15. The wording should typify the objective of the association in the briefest possible form, with a striking action design, showing some phase of mechanical power transmission. It is hoped to obtain an emblem and slogan which can be used on all advertising of the association or any member making appliances or materials used in the mechanical transmission of power. The object of the association is to determine the right drive or use of mechanical power transmission for any given installation, that is, the most efficient and economical use of mechanical power transmission equipment.

The Poetry Society will award $200 in prizes for the best poems about "Service, which is believed to represent the most stupendous of the ideals that have guided mankind through the ages." First prize, $100; second prize, $50; third prize, $25; fourth prize, $15. The six next best will receive honorary mention. Two prizes of $5 each and three honorary mentions will be awarded

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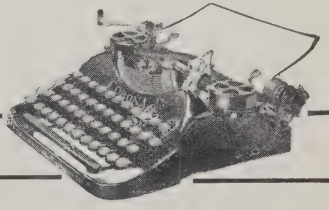

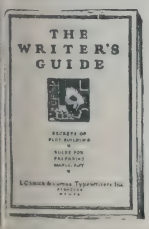

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to the best published poems on the subject of Service from past or contemporary poets. The contest is open to all. Entries should be addressed to the Poetry Society, 280 Madison Ave., New York. No restrictions are imposed as to the form of poems that may be submitted, or to the aspect or aspects of this broad subject that may be treated. Poets can send as many poems as they wish. Contest closes June 15, 1927.

The Chattanooga Writers' Club, announces the rules for the 1927 annual nature poem contest conducted by the club as the result of the establishment of a memorial prize fund, called the Elberta Clark Walker Fund. First prize, $20 for the best nature poem submitted, free to all entrants. Second prize, $10 for the best nature poem submitted by a Southern writer, living in the South. Poems must be original and unpublished. Poems shall not exceed seventy-two lines, but form and style shall be unrestricted. Author's name should not appear on the manuscript, but should be inclosed in a separate sealed envelope with the address. No manuscript shall be returned. Prize-winning poems shall become the property of the Writers' Club. The closing date will be November 1, 1927. Prizes will be awarded January 1, 1928. Contestants are requested not to ask for criticisms. Poems shall be sent to Miss Sarah Stansell, Contest Chairman, 2101 Duncan Avenue, Chattanooga, Tenn.

The Nation, New York, has awarded its annual prize of $100 to Thomas Hornsby Ferril, for his poem, "This Foreman", which appeared in the February 16th issue of The Nation. The second prize of $50 was awarded to Mary Austin, for her poem, "Puye", and the third prize of $25 went to Clinch Calkins, for his poem, "I Was a Maiden". Honorable Mention was given to Hal Saunders White, Pierre Loving, Allen Tate, and Charles Wagner.

The Walter Clare Martin poetry prize of $1000 was awarded to Frances Beebe, Los Angeles, Calif., for her poem, "The Woman and the Serpent".

The following prize contests, alphabetically arranged, are still running. Full particulars have been given in previous issues, but details are repeated here.

Adventure, Spring and Macdougal Sts., New York, offers an annual prize of $100 for the best poem published by them during the year.

The American Arbitration Crusade, 114 East 31st St., New York, is conducting a campaign to arouse all peace-lovers to redoubled efforts to prevent war, and in order to stimulate interest the following prizes are offered: $100 for the best letter, editorial or article appearing in any publication having at least 5000 circulation; $100 for the best public demonstration or concerted endeavor for obligatory arbitration; $100 for the best slogan; $100 for the best cartoon; $100 for the best sermon. The main idea must be arbitration in each instance. All contests will close on July 4, 1927.

The American Magazine, 250 Park Ave., New York, offers a monthly prize contest for the best letters of not over 400 words on a given subject. Prizes are $30, $20 and $10. Subject changes each month. Contest closes the 20th of the month.

American School Citizenship League announces its World Essay Contest for 1926-27, which is open to students of all countries. Two sets of prizes, to be known as the Seabury Prizes, are offered for the best essays on one of the following subjects: Open to Students in Normal Schools and Teachers Colleges—"The Teacher an Agent of International Goodwill." Open to Seniors in Secondary Schools—"How the Youth of the World Can Promote International Goodwill." Prizes of $75, $50 and $25 will be given for the three best essays in each set. Each essay must be accompanied by a topical outline and a bibliography with

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brief notes on each book. Essays must not exceed 5000 words (a length of 3000 words is suggested as desirable). Manuscripts not easily legible will not be considered. The name of the writer must not appear on the essay, which should be accompanied by a letter giving the writer's name, school, and home address, and sent to Dr. Fannie Fern Andrews, 405 Marlborough St., Boston 17, Mass., not later than June 1, 1927. Information concerning literature on the essay subjects may be obtained from the Secretary of the League.

The Blue Book Magazine, 36 South State St., Chicago, Ill., offers five monthly prizes of $100 each for the best "actual fact" stories of true experiences in the following special fields—Adventure, Mystery, Business, Sport, Humor. Stories should not exceed 2000 words and should be shorter, if possible. Address contributions to True Experience Editor, The Blue Book Magazine.

Albert & Charles Boni Inc. offers a prize of $1000 for the best novel of Negro Life. The author must be of Negro descent. The novel must deal with Negro life in the sense that one or more of its leading characters must be of Negro descent and its action must show the influence of this fact. Only manuscripts of unpublished works, accompanied by the declaration of the author that the manuscript is submitted in competition for the prize will be considered. All manuscripts submitted in competition must be offered to Albert & Charles Boni Inc. for publication and the prize shall be in addition to and independent of the royalty to be arranged for in the usual way. No manuscript containing less than 30,000 words will be considered as a novel for the purpose of this competition, and preference will be given in general to works of full novel length. Closing date has been extended to July 1, 1927. Address all contributions to Albert & Charles Boni Inc., 66 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

The Chicago Trust Company offers annual prizes of $300 and $200 for the two best manuscripts on original research in business and finance. The competition is open to bank employees, and students of banking, commerce or law. In addition to these prizes, there is a triennial research prize of $2500 for an unpublished study, submitted in competition, which is considered to contain the greatest original contribution to knowledge and advancement in the field outlined. This award will be made in the autumn of 1927. Papers should be sent not later than June 1, 1927, and should be addressed to Professor Leverett S. Lyon, Professor of Economics, Robert Brookings Graduate School of Economics and Government, 1724 I Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

The Christian Century, 440 So. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill., is offering prizes of $50, $25, $15, and $10 for the best work appearing in their magazine for 1927.

The Crowell Publishing Company, as publishers of The Woman's Home Companion, and **The John Day Company, Inc.,** will award $50,000 in prizes for the two most interesting, well-written novels best adapted to serial and book publication. The Crowell Publishing Company will pay $20,000 for the winning novel written by a man, and a like sum for the winning novel written by a woman, for the first American serial rights. The John Day Company will pay $5000 for the United States and Canadian book rights of the winning novel written by a man, and a like sum for the winning novel written by a woman, as advance payment on account of royalties. A competitor may submit more than one manuscript, but each must be entered separately. All manuscripts submitted must be original unpublished works written in English. Translations will not be eligible. No manuscript containing less than 50,000 words should be submitted; preference will be given to manuscripts of full novel length. All manuscripts must be

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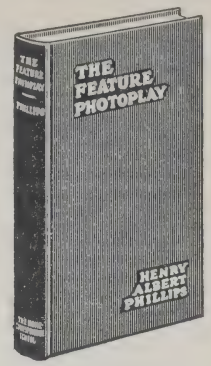

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addressed to "Novel Competition," c/o The John Day Company, 25 West 45th St., New York City. A printed agreement, which will be sent on request, must be mailed in a sealed envelope marked "Novel Competition" at the same time the manuscript is submitted, together with sufficient postage for return of manuscript. Competition closes July 1, 1927.

The Echo, 1837 Champa St., Denver, Colo., announces four important awards: The Joseph Reed Award of $500 for short-stories used in The Echo; The Annual Campion Memorial Award of $1000 for fostering the pioneer spirit of the West; the Mrs. Venner Z. Reed Fund of $500 for the development of Art and Literature through The Echo; The Frank E. Kistler Award of $220 for the best Echo covers. All material printed in the magazine is automatically entered for the awards. All contributions should be sent to The Editors of The Echo, 1837 Champa St., Denver, Colo. Self-addressed, stamped envelopes should be enclosed, as no unavailable manuscripts or drawings will be returned unless postage is sent.

A prize of $25 and three Honorable Mentions will be awarded in the **Frances Scott Key Contest** for the best patriotic song not over 24 lines. Three poems may be entered, the same never to have been published nor to be offered for publication until close of contest. Copies of poems sent should be kept as no manuscripts will be returned. Poems sent must be unsigned but accompanied by a separate piece of paper containing name and address of contestant and title of poem. Closing date August 30, 1927. Address, Leacy Naylor Green-Leach, 110 Morningside Drive, New York City.

Hart, Schaffner & Marx, Chicago, offer annually prizes amounting to $2000 for the best studies in the economic field. The prizes are divided as follows: Class A—first prize, $1000; second prize, $500. Class B—first prize, $300; second prize, $200. Class A includes any resident of the United States or Canada, without restriction. Class B includes only those who, at the time papers are sent in, are undergraduates of any American college. Subjects for studies are suggested, but any other subjects may be chosen, if approved by the Committee. Manuscripts should be inscribed with an assumed name, the class in which they are presented, and accompanied by a sealed envelope giving the real name and address of the competitor, together with any degrees or distinctions already obtained. If competitor is in Class B, the sealed envelope should contain the name of the institution in which he is studying. Contributions should be sent to J. Laurence Laughlin, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill., on or before June 1, 1927. Further particulars and a list of subjects already approved by the Committee may be obtained from Mr. Laughlin.

Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce is offering four prizes for the best authentic historical pageants submitted, portraying the history of Hot Springs dating from the arrival of the Spanish explorer, Ferdinand DeSoto, in 1541, to the present day. The pageant will be staged to celebrate the 100th birthday of Hot Springs National Park in 1932. The first prize consists of $1000 cash; second prize, a free trip to Hot Springs with hotel enterainment for two weeks; third prize, a free trip to Hot Springs with hotel entertainment for two weeks; third prize, free transportation to Hot Springs. The contest is open for twelve months, and anyone may submit scenarios. Address Centennial Celebration Club, P. O. Box 886, Hot Springs National Park, Ark.

The Infantry Journal, Washington, D. C., will award a prize of $1500 for the best music for "The Infantry Song". The object of the contest is to produce original music, in march time, that will be suitable for a song (with chorus) for the Infantry. The music should be simple, catchy and capable of being learned readily by the rank and file, and at the same time stirring and full of pep, but

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Life Cartoon Comedies, 598 Madison Ave., New York, will pay $50 for each scenario or idea they can use for their comedies, now being released by Educational Film Exchange, Inc. Each of these comedies is five hundred feet (above half a reel) in length, and is crammed with as many humorous ideas, or "gags", as can possibly be included in that limited space. Ideas do not have to be in scenario form, nor is it even necessary to work out a complete story. They will pay full rates for one humorous idea—one "gag" —that they can use. Manuscripts should not exceed five hundred words in length.

The Pioneer, 113 Tradd St., Statesville, N. C., announces the Ann Spencer Penn Poetry Contest, which has five classes open to residents of North Carolina. For the best thirty-two line lyric, a first prize of $10 and a second prize of $5; for the best descriptive poem of North Carolina scenery, a first prize of $10 and a second prize of $5; for the best sixteen-line lyric, and for the best Italian sonnet, a first prize of $5 each, and second prizes of $2.50 each; for the best twelve-line lyric, a first prize of $3.00, and a second prize of $2.00. Contests close July 1, 1927. Address all communications to the Editor of The Pioneer, 113 Tradd St., Statesville, N. C.

The Stanford Illustrated Review, an alumni magazine published at Stanford University, Calif., offers each month a cash prize of $25 for the most interesting article, of 1000 to 1500 words, on any subject having to do with Stanford University, or one of her alumni.

True Story Magazine, 1926 Broadway, New York, is offering $10, $5 and $3 each month for the best letters stating why readers do or do not like the different features in each month's issue, and offering suggestions for improvement. Contest closes the 15th of each month. Address the Editor.

The United Daughters of the Confederacy is offering the Mrs. Simon Baruch University Prize of $1000, to be awarded biennially, for the purpose of encouraging research in the history of the South, particularly in the Confederate period. The competition is limited to undergraduates and graduate students of universities and standard colleges in the United States and those who have been students in such institutions within the preceding three years. The prize will be awarded for an unpublished monograph or essay of high merit in the field of Southern history, preferably in or near the period of the Confederacy or bearing on the causes that led to the War Between the States. If no essay of high merit shall be submitted in any competition the prize will not be awarded for that year. It is expected that essays will comprise not less than 10,000 words and it is preferred that they be of considerably greater length. Essays in the first competition must be sent before September 1, 1927, to Mrs. Arthur H. Jennings, Chairman, 2200 Rivermont Ave., Lynchburg, Va.

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Yale University Press, New Haven Conn., publishes a Yale Series of Younger Poets, which is open to writers of American citizenship, who are under thirty years of age and have not previously published a volume of verse. Manuscripts for this competition are due May 1st and November 1st in each year. The best manuscript submitted in each competition is, if recommended by the Editor, published at the expense of the Yale University Press, the author receiving the usual 10% royalty on all copies sold in the United States. It is permissible to include poems previously published in periodicals or newspapers, if the consent of such journals is given for such publication. Contestants should address manuscripts and correspondence to the Editor, Yale Series of Younger Poets, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn.

MISCELLLANEOUS

Texas Motor Service Journal, 109½ S. Market St., Dallas, Texas. Editor, C. C. Hayley. Reports: "This is a trade journal. Uses true stories of motorists' experiences at service stations, tire service, battery shop and automobile repair establishments, featuring local and touring motorists' viewpoints that may interest or profit motorist serving trades. Photographs used. Also stories of new motor-service methods or labor saving shop or service ideas, with illustrations or drawings where possible. Special stories of fact depicting the 'ups and downs' of the independent owned gasoline and oil retail trade in any locality or territory. Short articles preferred unless exceptional. Prompt reports and payment upon acceptance."

The Jewish Humorist, 32 Union Square, New York. Weekly, 10c; $3.50. Editor, Herbert Forbush. Reports: "Want all kinds of humorous material of Jewish life, stories up to 500 words, verse, limericks, jokes, anecdotes, skits, short burlesques in prose and verse, true love letters, and "Wise Cracks". Also want material in the Jewish jargon, some real comic cartoons for the cover and the inside, and some cartoons of prominent Jewish people. Material should be cleverly humorous, peppy, and full of human interest. Manuscripts will be reported on within two weeks, and payment made on publication at fair rates according to quality."

"I Confess", 97 Fifth Ave., New York. Every two weeks, 15c; $3.50. Editor, Elizabeth Sharp. In this magazine of personal experience, stories are built from real life. First-person singular

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Radio Program Weekly, 230 Fifth Ave., New York. Published by the Experimenter Publishing Company as a sister magazine to Radio News. Reports: "Our requirements for the new weekly are fiction stories with a good radio background, which must not be too technical, but still must provide themes of particular interest to radio fans. We pay for all accepted material upon publication, and return unavailable manuscripts when return postage is provided."

The Commission on Interracial Cooperation, 409 Palmer Bldg., Atlanta, Ga. R. B. Eleazer, Educational Director, reports: "We are in the market for short, human-interest stories, based on the idea of understanding and good will across racial lines, especially as between American white people and Negroes. We can use stories suited to either adults or children."

Sentimental Stories, a new monthly to be published by Romance Publishers, 584 Drexel Bldg., Philadelphia, Penna., will be brought out in April. C. M. Stuart, Associate Editor, reports: "There will be a need of clean sentimental love tales, in both the first and third person, as well as short verse of the same character."

The Will O' The Wisp, Escanaba, Mich. Monthly, $1.00. Editors, C. H. Nelson and J. G. Black. A new ultra-modern magazine using short articles and modernistic poetry. Realistic bits of life mainly used. No payment being made at present for contributions. Prospective contributors should secure sample copy of the magazine.

Ernest C. Wilson has succeeded Gardner Hunting as editor of **Youth,** 917 Tracy Avenue, Kansas City, Mo.

Sunset, 1045 Sansome St., San Francisco, Calif., reports that it no longer uses jokes.

Crime Mysteries, 97 Fifth Ave., New York. A new magazine to be brought out shortly by The Dell Publishing Company. The editor will be Alice Strope, the associate editor, Anne Buck. Report: "We want short-stories, novelettes, and serials. In general, the short-stories should be from 3000 to 8000 words long, the novelettes approximately 25,000 words, and the serials from 36,000 to 80,000 words in length. We are particularly interested in yarns of the action type dealing with criminals and detectives, but we shall have place as well for human-interest crook stories, humorous crook stories, and psychological crime stories. The crime element is essential, but it is not necessary to have a detective in every yarn. We make it a point to report on manuscripts within ten days of their receipt, and we pay good rates, on acceptance."

"Loudspeaker", 203 East 12th St., New York. A monthly magazine for the radio fan. Reports: "In the market for short-stories, feature articles, humor, interviews and photographs. Material must deal with radio. Scientific subjects are not wanted. Preference will be given to articles dealing with radio and the home. Material must be limited to 1500 words; payment for acceptable material will be modest but prompt. We are also in the market for articles and practical suggestions and photographs which will help the dealer sell radios. Payment will be liberal and prompt."

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by The Burwyn Publishing Company. Editor, Aaron Wyn. Reports: "For the present we will use first-person stories up to 4000 words in length, the shorter the better. Stories should be well motivated and have a strong young love interest, distinctly modern in tone. Payment will be made at the rate of 1c a word and up, on acceptance within one to three weeks."

Literature, Drama & Art, Little Falls, Minn. Formerly the Writers' Bulletin. Reports: "We will use short articles both technical and inspirational as well as news of writers, editors and magazines. For articles we pay one-half to one cent per word."

Thrilling Tales, 271 Madison Ave., New York. Monthly, 20c; $2.00. Editor, Horace J. Gardner. Reports: "In the market for short stories, novelettes, and serials which are really thrillers—war stories are especially desired—also some short humorous stories."

True Confessions, Robbinsdale, Minn. Fred Jonson, Associate Editor, reports: "Stronger stories told in fewer words is the sesame to editorial favor. We want brevity, but not at a sacrifice of lucidity. We consider stories of 4000 words an ideal length. Themes desired are love and romance, told in the first person, usually by a girl. Stories accepted by True Confessions must have plot and reality. A minimum rate of 2c a word is paid upon acceptance."

Film Fun, 97 Fifth Ave., New York. Curtis Mitchell, Editor, reports: "Film Fun is now in the market for short humorous material of all types which may or may not be about the motion pictures. Our present needs are these: Jokes of the brief 'he and she' variety which can be used in conjunction with illustrations or specially posed photographs. Short paragraphs of a humorous sort which may or may not refer to the movies. Short verses—nothing over eight or ten lines—which have a good swing and a joke. Quips of any and every sort. In submitting material to Film Fun it should be remembered that we can use nothing of a subtle nature. The sophisticated wisecrack or windy esoteric anecdote have no place in our columns. We want fun, humor inclined toward custard pie and slapstick rather than toward irony or sarcasm. Our rate of payment has not been definitely settled. It will be a sliding scale, payment to be made in accordance with the worth of the contribution, and will compare favorably with other humorous publications. And this is important. All manuscripts will be paid for upon acceptance."

Fiction House, Inc., 461 Eighth Ave., New York, reports the following needs for its various publications: "**Action Stories** is in the market for two or three short novelets, 9000 to 12,000 words—with an outdoor locale where adventure's high and he-men crash the gates to immortality."

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AGRICULTURAL PUBLICATIONS

American Sheep Breeder and Wool Grower, 817 Exchange St., Chicago, Ill. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, W. W. Burch. Practical articles on sheep and wool, and related matters. Also photographs of sheep or attractive farm scenes.

Arkansas Homestead, Little Rock, Ark. Twice a month, 5c; 50c. Editor, John C. Small. Reports: "Can use articles on strictly farm topics, not over 1200 words, and preferably from 800 to 1000 words. Rate of payment is 1/3c per word. Pay $2.00 each for photographs suitable for front cover, something with human interest pertaining to the farm. Also use agricultural views illustrating articles. Material is reported on within ten days, and payment is made on publication."

Beekeeper's Review, Almont, Mich. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, A. Rattray. Uses short practical articles by practical beekeepers; also some photographs. Material paid for on publication.

Berkshire World, 618 S. 6th St., Springfield, Ill. Monthly, 15c; $1.00. Editor, L. E. Frost. A journal devoted to the best interests of the swine industry and Berkshires in particular.

Better Fruit, 12th and Jefferson Sts., Portland, Ore. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, Ernest C. Potts. Has its own staff of contributors. Sometimes purchase brief informative articles on problems in growing and marketing fruit from authors qualified to write them.

Better Homes and Gardens, 17th and Locust Sts., Des Moines, Iowa. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, Charles C. Sherlock. Reports: "This magazine appeals to people of average means living in cities, towns, and suburbs. It interests itself in every phase of homemaking in urban communities. We are anxious to secure from competent writers articles about 1000 words on these subjects, which include building, home-financing, garden and lawn making, flower growing and fruit culture, so far as it interests the man living on a city lot. Photographs. Pay promptly upon acceptance with a minimum of 1c a word and $1.00 each for photographs."

Black Fox Magazine, 1400 Broadway, New York. Monthly, 25c; $2.00. Editor, F. C. Kaye. Use articles pertaining to fur farming, written by people connected with the industry.

California Cultivator and Live Stock and Dairy Journal, 317 Central Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. Weekly, 5c; $1.00. Editor, W. R. Wood. Reports: "Being a state publication we prefer articles written by California writers, or at least those understanding western agricultural conditions. Articles from 600 to 1200 words are preferred. Our reading matter each week is divided into five departments—Horticulture, General Agriculture, Livestock, Poultry, and a Household Department. Material is reported on at once, and payment made on the 10th of the month following publication."

Capper's Farmer, Topeka, Kans. Monthly, 5c; 25c. Editor, Ray Yarnell. Buy very little material from general writers. Most of the items are written by farm people, and tell their experiences on the farm. Occasionally an item written by a third party, giving the exact experience of the farmer, and containing the name and post office address of the farmer is used. For the most part photographs are used to illustrate specific stories. Buy very little poetry, and are not interested in fiction. Report on manuscripts as soon as possible, and pay on acceptance.

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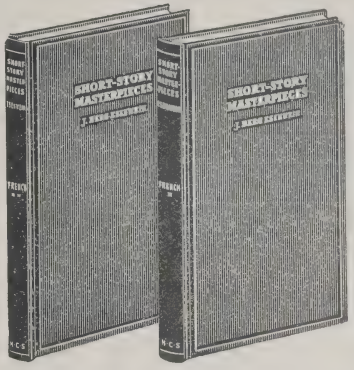

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Corn Belt Farmer, 422 Court Ave., Des Moines, Iowa. Publisher, Paul B. Talbot. Monthly, 5c; 50c. Human interest stories not over 3000 words in length, to be published in two parts. Circulation is strictly rural. Photographs.

The Country Gentleman, Independence Square, Philadelphia, Pa. Monthly, 5c; three years for $1.00. Editor, Loring A. Schuler. An illustrated magazine for country dwellers. Use articles, from 2500 to 3000 words in length, dealing with general or specific aspects of farming or country life; short items 300 to 1000 words about all the practical branches of agriculture; short-stories having outdoor or country background, of 7500 words; serials of outdoor life from 60,000 to 75,000 words; inspirational articles and short practical items for its woman's department; some short verse, jokes and humorous verse for the Chaff Department. Pays on acceptance.

Country Homes, 312 W. Redwood St., Baltimore, Md. Every two months, 35c; $4.00. Editor, F. Heath Coggins. Use articles from 700 to 1000 words, on all phases of interior decoration, gardening, grounds of the home, etc. No photographs. Material reported on within ten days, and payment made on acceptance.

Country Life, Garden City, L. I., New York. Monthly, 50c; $5.00. Editor, Reginald Townsend. A beautifully illustrated periodical for the country estate owner. Specializes on four subjects—country house building and landscaping, decorating, gardening and outdoor sports. Rarely considers manuscripts without photographs. Articles, running from 700 to 1000 words, must be of unquestioned authority. No fiction or poetry. Material reported on immediately, and payment on acceptance at 1c to 3c a word.

The Dairy Farmer, Des Moines, Iowa. Twice a month, 5c; 60c. Editor, C. A. Goss. Most of the articles are written on special assignment. Occasionally buy from outside contributors, who have a technical background that will enable them to write articles of a technical agricultural or dairy nature. Use individual experience stories, community stories, "how to" articles, and news items ranging in length from short paragraphs to 2000 words in length. Photographs necessary with feature articles. Payment on acceptance, at 1c per word up.

The Dairy World, 608 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill. Monthly, 10c; $1.00. Editor, E. C. Ackerman. Stories of 1000 to 2000 words, relative to dairying campaigns—nothing theoretical, but actual accomplishments wanted. Photographs. Payment on publication, at 1c a word, and $1.00 for photographs.

The Dixie Dairy and Poultry Journal, 110 Seventh Ave., Nashville, Tenn. Monthly. Editor, Edgar A. Wright. Articles on poultry and dairying, and other material suitable for Southern rural readers; also poetry of nature or countryside or simpler narrative.

Everybody's Poultry Magazine, Hanover, Penn. Monthly, 5c; 60c. Editor, Henry P. Schwab. Short, practical items for poultry raisers.

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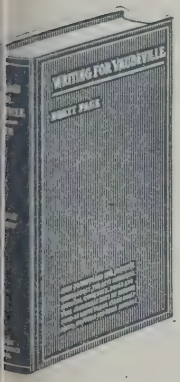

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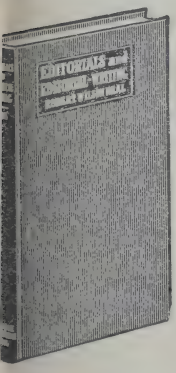

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E. D., San Diego. (1) There is no essential difference between the expressions "She has no tact whatsoever", and "She has no tact whatever", except that "Whatsoever" is somewhat more formal and intensive than "whatever". Either expression is grammatically correct. (2) It is better to say "Be it never so humble", than "Be it ever so humble", because the former expression conveys the idea that never was anything so humble as this or that. (3) The expression in Irving Cobb's story, "It *would appear* that her car was still out of commission" is an idiom, and therefore not subject to grammatical analysis. It is equivalent to saying "It seemed as if."

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JUNE, 1927

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Springfield, Mass.

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A Journal for All Who Write

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JUNE, 1927 Volume XXIX, No. 6

The Writer's Monthly

Marketing Books Via Radio

Anthony Autumn

Something New under the Sun and on the Air Described Herein, besides a New Slant to an Old Subject

IT HAS been pointed out time and time again by writers of what-to-write-and-how-to-write-it articles that it is usually very foolish for an author to publish his works at his own expense. The wiseacres have all agreed that if a work is worth publishing at all some publisher can be found who will undertake it.

Nine times out of ten this counsel is sage enough, but every once in a while some fellow with a new idea or two on an old subject will write a book about what he has learned, nothwithstanding the fact that there seems no demand for that kind of material. It might be that he would attempt a series of chapters on physical exercise, or a new collection of bedtime stories for the kids—just to cite two subjects that are about as difficult as anything in the world for which to find a publisher who is willing to tackle them.

The late Walter Camp had sufficient prestige to put across any number of physical exercise books. Possibly Jack Dempsey could do it. But for some obscure "professor" of an equally obscure gymnasium to try such a thing would be time and effort wasted. That which would generally apply to a book on calisthenics is equally true of a book of bedtime stories. There are, of course, three or four eminent bedtime story writers whose articles are syndicated throughout the land and whose books are eagerly snatched up by the publishers while they are still damp from the typewriter ribbon, but a "rank outsider" has little chance. And if he should find a publisher, there would be little possibility of his making any money.

Yet if the physical-exercise expert and the bedtime-story writer have something worth while there is no reason in the world why they should not be accorded an audience. If a publisher is fearful of financing their efforts, then it is up to them, as a last resort, to publish them themselves. But they should first work out a definite merchandising plan.

I have cited the concrete examples of a physical exercise book and a collection of bedtime stories because I know what a success was made with books of these two sorts under a selling plan in which the authors used invention's most modern publicity device, and gathered in more ready sheckles in a month than they would have been able to worry out of a publisher in royalties in years.

Their publicity agent was a radio broadcasting station, and because it opens up wonderful opportunities for the writer who has something of worth to market, some little literary specialty or other he is forced to publish himself, it would seem excusable to pass the experiences of these two writers on.

Both live in the same western city, and the example set by the first spurred on the other to his own success.

The calisthenics expert worked out a new system of physical exercises. He wrote a book on the subject, a book filled with pretty diagrams and convincing prose, but the publishers would have none of it. He was unknown, and while some of the houses to which the manuscript was sent went so far as to admit that the author seemed to have something novel in his system, they decided that the risk would not be worth the small gain to be made, if indeed there were gain at all.

But the writer refused to be discouraged. The ethics of publicity bothered him little. His one desire was to sell his book, and he felt that if he could once get his idea before the public, sales would follow. So he decided that he must be his own publisher; and, not being a "really and truly writer", he had somewhere picked up a grain or two of business sense. He worked out various merchandising plans, but not until he happened to "listen in" on the radio to a period of physical exercises did he begin to see light.

He immediately went to the manager of one of the big broadcasting stations. That gentleman looked his manuscript over and heard his plan. He liked the idea, but told the writer it would be impossible for him to advertise the book directly via radio. He did suggest, however, that the author give a series of radio talks from the book, and by crediting the book for the talks, a demand might be created for it.

With this so pleasantly settled, all seemed smooth sailing, but the writer was at once plunged into gloom by the announcement that the talk could only be broadcast at 7 o'clock in the morning. The manager admitted that few people "listened in" at that hour, and that the range of the station was not so

great as during the hours of darkness, but it was absolutely the best the station could do.

The writer was somewhat skeptical of any results from broadcasting at breakfast time, but he decided to try it.

He then got out a series of attractive leaflets describing his book, its purpose, and its price. These were to be sent out in answer to inquiries, if any came in. He also placed a C.O.D order with a local publishing house for 2000 copies of the book because the broadcasting station insisted that the book be actually in existence before mention was made of it on the air.

Never was the start of a new and ambitious undertaking more cheerless. At 7 A.M. on that first morning the large broadcasting studio was bare of all save the radio engineer and the manager, the latter present to act as announcer. The writer had quailed at the idea of giving the exercises so early in the day, and now as the chill of the empty studio invaded him he was positively doubtful of any good to come from it all.

However, he went through with the first talk. To him his voice sounded hollow and meaningless. He might have been in his own room rehearsing to himself, for all the response he got from the cold microphone. He wasn't even sure that his voice could be heard outside the building. He could scarcely believe the manager's statement that an eastern branch of the station, 2000 miles away, had sent word that reception was clear.

The next day he went through a repetition of the morning before. On the third day he first learned that someone was really listening in. The station received two wires, one from 700 miles away. This one read:

"Heard you fine. Great stuff. Exercises best ever."

The other inquired about the book. Two letters, and leaflets describing the book, were immediately sent to the listeners, addressed simply to their names and the cities from which the wires had come, as no mailing addresses had been given.

The next day there were more wires, together with some letters and cards. Many of them inquired about the book. Up to this time the announcer had simply stated:

"We will now have a short period of physical exercises conducted by Professor Charles T. Brown, physical instructor at radio broadcasting station W.X.Y. The exercises are taken from Professor Brown's book, 'Leaning Toward Health'. The book title, the writer's name, and the station call-letters are, of course, imaginary. Nothing was said to indicate when the book was published or where it might be obtained.

Within a week from the time broadcasting started, orders for the book at $2.00 each had begun to come in. Then the announcer changed his set speech. He now said:

"The mail at radio broadcasting station W.X.Y. has been swamped during the past few days with letters and telegrams of inquiry re-

garding Professor Brown's new book, 'Leaning Toward Health.' There seems to be a general desire on the part of early-morning radio and physical culture fans to know more of Professor Brown's system. We feel that we should do everything we can to aid our listeners to obtain that information they desire, so if you will drop a card to station W.X.Y., bearing your name and address, we will see that a descriptive leaflet is sent you at once."

Then the inquiries really began to arrive. The book had barely been set in type when the broadcasting was started, and letters of anxiety from people who had sent in their $2, but who had not promptly received a book, had begun to come in before it was off the press.

The exercises were broadcast every morning but Sunday for a month, and the physical instructor made a small fortune. The profit was all his, and each book netted him about $1.50. The best part of it was that the first exercises proved so popular that it was necessary to get out a second book continuing the series. The result is that the writer is a firm believer in self-published books of merit *where an effective merchandising system is used.* The books now have a wide bookstore sale and many a publisher will gladly handle any book on physical exercise this instructor will write.

The same methods were used with the bedtime story book. The man who reads the stories for the air audience has been reading bedtime stories from this same station for years, but he had never before read them with the idea of marketing any particular book. The stories proved popular and their author has made much more money than he would have on a royalty basis. His stories are heard by thousands of parents and scores of thousands of children nightly, and the orders are rolling in.

There would seem to be great possibilities in the radio along this line. Of course the book must first have merit. The radio audience in America consists of hundreds of thousands of people, all of whom are addressed at once, and all of whom are talked to as directly as if the writer were sitting in their parlors. Added to it all are the glamor and mystery of the radio, which even makes a crop report sound entertaining if caught from a station far enough away.

The manager of Station W.X.Y. has tabulated the responses to broadcasting at that station during the past two years and has found that one letter is received to every 500 listeners. This average, however, can be greatly increased if a special appeal is made, and it is up to the author with a book to sell via radio to plan an effective appeal, but he must do it without resorting to direct advertising.

Properly used, the radio should prove a veritable mint to the clever writer who has something of merit and who either desires or is forced by circumstances to publish his own book.

How Ruel McDaniel "Puts It Across"

Frank H. Williams

It's always Interesting to Know how Other Writers Make a Success of Authorship; this is how Ruel McDaniel Works so Successfully

RUEL McDANIEL has been free-lancing for three years, and during that period has sold to most of the business publications—System, Business, Printers' Ink, Retail Ledger, and other publications of a similar character, to the number of a hundred or more articles.

Previous to becoming a free-lance writer Mr. McDaniel was the advertising manager of several trade publications in New Orleans, and before that he was in the Navy. It was while he was in Uncle Sam's service that he became interested in writing. At that time he saw several copies of the WRITER'S MONTHLY while visiting different libraries, and upon reading this magazine he decided that he could write as well as other people. So on getting out of the Navy and into business he began writing about various business problems, and selling such articles in increasing quantities, until free-lancing was the inevitable result.

Now Mr. McDaniel, with his wife, leads a tremendously interesting life. In his big Buick roadster the couple travel from one section of the country to another, spending a month or so in a city and after gleaning the good stories from such a city, moving on to pastures new.

When I saw Mr. McDaniel it was just after he and his wife had spent a month in San Diego, having come to the Southern California city from their permanent home in San Antonio, Texas. They were then on their way to Hollywood to spend a couple of months in the film capital, and expected to drive on up the famous Pacific Highway, at the end of the two months, to the far northwestern cities—Portland, Spokane, Seattle, Vancouver, and others.

It is interesting to know that Mr. McDaniel finds, as so many other business writers have found, that the fundamental basis of success in writing such articles consists in the interview. The writer of business articles who is able to step out and get business men to talk about their methods in making successes of their businesses is many times better equipped for making a success of his writing than is the writer who falls down

hard when it comes to interviewing.

"I do my interviewing in the morning, as a general thing," said the free lancer in speaking of his methods, "and of course I meet all the discouragements in interviewing that come to most men who try to procure interviews. These discouragements are such things as these:

"Wasting a lot of time because people are out of their stores or offices, or because they are busy and aren't able to talk to me at the time I call on them;

"Having tremendous difficulties in getting the men who know a lot about business to tell what they know. It isn't because they don't want to talk for publication, it is simply because they don't know how to talk. They aren't able to pick out the high lights of their experiences — the things which would be of great interest to other men in the same lines of business—and so I have to probe and pry and question and work like the very Old Harry to get anything out of them. Generally, though, when I do get anything out of these men who are so very hard to interview it proves to be worth while indeed.

"And, finally, there is the discouragement that comes when it is realized that a lot of time and effort has been expended with a man who looked as if there might be a good story in his methods but who proves to have nothing new or worth while in his activities at all.

"But all these discouragements are a part of the game, and the interviewer learns to expect them and learns not to take them to heart but to keep right on plowing ahead anyhow.

"I do my writing in the afternoons and evenings—on a portable typewriter, for the most part. I've pounded out so much copy in the past three years that I've pounded two machines to pieces.

"I try to turn out at least 3,000 words a day, although when we are traveling on the road it is sometimes the case that I turn out only 1,500 words a day. I try to average 75,000 words a month. That is my stint, or quota, or whatever you might want to call it. It is a pretty fair amount of production, I feel. Of course, I have gone over that amount of production, and I have gone under it, but through the months my production will come close to averaging just that amount.

"As a general thing I find that the more work I put in on an article the easier it sells, and the more money I get for it.

"For example, just recently I sold for $85 a 3,000-word article to Business, the publication that is put out by the Burroughs Adding Machine Company of Detroit. The preparation of this article consumed much time and called for a great deal of work. I wrote at least fifty letters in procuring material for that article—it was about the slogans used by manufacturers in pushing their products—and it took a considerable amount of time

to assemble all the material in order and to present it in just the right way. But all this work was well worth while, of course, since it brought in a check at approximately three cents a word.

"I also find it a decidedly worthwhile matter to keep careful books recording whatever I do. My wife handles the bookkeeping end of the business, besides writing and selling considerable fiction. We keep track of the articles written by recording the exact character of their contents, the stores or institutions from which the data for the articles was secured, the publications to which they are sent, and the word received from the periodicals regarding the manuscript.

"This makes it certain that I will never be at a loss as to what some particular article was about, and I am never doubtful as to where it has been sent.

"Then, I follow up collections very closely, although, with the majority of publications, the checks come along promptly without any urging on my part. But when a publication drifts along for a month or two after the publication of an article without paying up, I write them a polite note, and also further letters, if necessary, until I get what is due me. This is only good business. It is what other business men do. Why should the writer hesitate about going after collections just as any other business man would?

"That, by the way, is what I consider the writer of business articles to be—a regular business man, just as much as any other business man. In fact, the writer of business articles is by way of being an efficiency expert, as he goes around among various lines of business men and picks out their best ways of carrying on, and so gets a splendid slant on the best methods used in many lines of production and merchandising."

Mr. McDaniel on a recent trip East called upon the publishers and editors of many of the magazines that are regularly using his material. He finds that this is the best sort of method of finding out just what is wanted and getting the personal touch into the writing business. Naturally, he would not recommend this plan to the novice.

Of course, at all times Mr. McDaniel supplies the editors with the very material they want. He doesn't try to get them to establish new policies for their businesses, or anything of that sort. He gives the editors and publishers what they want and in the way they want it. So it is no wonder that this rising free lance is so successful, and that he and his wife are having such a splendid time seeing the world.

And aren't there worth-while ideas and suggestions in all this for other ambitious writers?

"Scalping" For $1,500

Olin J. Harris

If You Have Never Practiced the Gentle Art of Scalping Read this Article and You May Learn How It is Done

WHEN old Joe Beland died, not long ago, I lost at least $1,000. But on the other hand, he had already been worth $1,000 to me, and in addition I had literally presented him with somewhere around $500. That makes —but I'll tell you about it.

I "scalped" a newspaper item three years ago, and followed it up somewhat extensively. It was my own fault that I didn't make more out of the item I clipped, but when you write a hundred-and-one different stories on the same theme you're sure to grow stale on the subject at frequent intervals—at least, I know I do. This staleness was the only reason why I didn't write and sell more stories about Joe. However, a thousand dollars isn't to be sneezed at, you will agree, to say nothing of the five hundred for the old man himself.

Now, here's the story:

Joe Beland first came to my attention when I read a reporter's story of a political convention in an unimportant country riding—as we call it in Canada—some eighty miles from my home town. In the course of his account the reporter mentioned the fact that the most interesting character there was an old chap 107 years old, still active and vigorous, a regular attendant at political conventions and country picnics, and still able to do farm chores.

That item interested me more than a little, but I didn't fully realize its possibilities for a month or two. At the time, I was not in a position to follow it up immediately, but the cutting went into my file, and while waiting an opportunity to make a trip to see the old man I wrote his family to obtain what information I could, and to verify his age. By means of a questionnaire, on which I spent some thought, I obtained many details concerning his career and experiences, and was delighted to find that his age was no myth, but absolutely authenticated by the parish register.

This was all I needed to make me grow enthusiastic about the story, and it wasn't hard to interest a photographer friend in a proposition that we work it on a basis whereby he and I would split fifty-fifty on all pictures of Joe Beland that we could jointly market, while any additional revenue from stories would be mine alone.

Immediately that my regular

duties permitted me to get a few days' leave we hit the trail for the hamlet of Tancredia, Calumet Island, Quebec—a place so small that you will not find it on any map I've ever seen. Here we hit a snag. The district is almost entirely French Canadian, so little English is spoken, and neither my photographer nor I was able to manage sufficient French to carry on any sort of conversation. But after much chasing around, we located a chap who consented to act as interpreter, and we explained our mission to Old Joe himself.

Would Mr. Beland pose for some pictures?

He would be glad to, and "The Patriarch of Calumet" posed until every one of the 24 plates we had brought were used—and we cursed ourselves for not bringing more. We posed him at the woodpile, vigorously swinging the axe. We posed him sawing wood. We posed him digging in his garden. We posed him riding in the car that made Henry a household name. We posed him refreshing himself with a popular beverage. We posed him with his great-great-grand child, aged 7 months, as "Springtime and December of Life." We posed him in the usual five-generation group.

No matter what our request, Old Joe Beland complied with an enthusiasm and vigor nothing short of amazing in one who had long outrun the allotted three-score-years-and-ten. A little stooped, he was, but his only actual infirmity was deafness. His eyes sparkled as he hastened to carry out each suggestion. Filmdom's most celebrated "character" man never gave a more splendid performance.

And in between "shots," through the interpreter I talked to Joe Beland of the things he had done, the things he had seen, and his simple philosophy of life. The longer we stayed, the greater became my enthusiasm. Here was a story with a thousand-and-one angles—the story of a veteran French Canadian pioneer who at 107 was carrying on from day to day just as he had done for years, who was approaching the end of the trail with simple, rugged faith.

When finally we left, it was growing late, and Joe Beland must retire early, for he needs be up at his regular hour in the morning—5 o'clock. *"Merci, messieurs. Merci,"* he said as we left him a little banknote as a souvenir and as a mark of our appreciation of what he had done. *"Bon, soir."*

And we promised to return soon.

From the *curé,* the hotel keeper and others we obtained some additional information concerning this picturesque character.

Now we had the material, where should we start? That was the next question. We had timed our visit about a month before the old man's birthday, and decided to gamble that Fate would grant him at least another month's lease of life. This enabled us to syndicate our pictures ourselves, submitting them directly to every rotogravure paper listed, every picture paper,

to English and European syndicates—and to prepare and submit feature stories to several prospective buyers. The task was no small one, but it was finally done. And was it worth while.

We had rejections, to be sure, but in comparison with the volume sent out the number was small. In some one of his numerous poses, Joe Beland figured very prominently in the news of the day when the release date finally came.

This widespread publicity paved the way for the numerous magazine stories I had been busy grinding out during the interval between submitting the first batch of material and Joe's birthday. The widest market for these were the farm papers, for Beland was a farmer, so naturally I had concentrated on these periodicals.

Then the story of Joe's trip in the Ford made good reading for an automobile magazine.

A publication devoted to physical culture was interested in the old-timer's rules for longevity. A trade paper read by opticians gave space to the fact that at 107 Joe could point out a lone pine on a knoll four miles from his humble home. A women's magazine was interested in the menu for his birthday party. A tobacco paper pointed to him as an argument against the anti-smokers. A movie magazine presented him as one of the few on the continent who had never seen a flicker on the screen.

And there were many other phases of the subject—so many, in fact, that I cannot now recall them all without digging up my records, and they're none too accurate, for I never was a good bookkeeper. But for three months I wrote about Joe Beland—wrote myself out, in fact, although I knew that there were many angles I had not touched. Then I decided to lay off for a while.

Soon the checks began to come along. Three dollars was the smallest, with others running up to $25, $30 and even $50. Slowly, at first, but steadily they came. For five months the postman brought them. It had paid well to "scalp" that newspaper item, and follow it up.

Joe Beland had proved such a profitable subject that my partner and I decided a substantial remembrance was in order, particularly in view of the fact that, whatever his other virtues, Old Joe had not been thrifty, and was dependent upon his children. We sent the check along, together with a letter to his son stipulating that it be used for his upkeep, and a suggestion that he enter into an agreement that Joe be under contract to us with respect to all stories and photographs. In consideration of this, we offered a generous percentage of all proceeds.

The agreement was entered into, and once more I resumed writing stories about Calumet's now almost-famous character. To detail them would be largely a repetition of the explanation already made. It is sufficient to say that

for over two years I from time to time received checks for which I had to thank that newspaper clipping. On each of the two birthdays that followed I visited Old Joe Beland, and on each got inspiration for some story I had previously overlooked.

The possibility of exploiting him as the author of testimonials was not overlooked by us. In fact, we did sell two or three legitimate ones, and could have sold many more at a pretty price to manufacturers of a variety of nostrums. But, somehow, I could not reconcile this trickery with simple, honest Joe Beland, and we passed up this opportunity for "easy money." However, there was one exception worth while noting.

When we made our second trip to Calumet, we took along a quantity of Joe's favorite tobacco, a case of a popular "soft" beverage, and a few other gifts. This beverage was one he had never tasted, and it made an immediate hit with him. At the time, this incident had no significance for us. We had too many other things in mind to give any attention to it. Unknown to us, Lady Luck was with us.

A few months later, the manufacturer of the beverage in question announced a competition on the subject "When I Enjoy — — most." Substantial prizes were offered, and on reading the announcement it brought to mind the keen enjoyment Joe had shown when we took him the case of "soft" drink on the occasion of our last visit. Inspiration! I dashed off a letter to the old man's son, telling him of the competition, and suggesting that he get Joe's answer to the inferred question.

He acted on the suggestion, sent me back a simple little letter of a few lines telling how much the veteran enjoyed —— —— after he had labored in his garden and sat down to enjoy the rest to which his labor and his 108 years entitled him. I forwarded the letter as an entry in the contest. It won a $200 cash prize—and more publicity for Joe.

That, I think, was legitimate, for it was true. The other cases were similar.

Now Old Joe Beland has gone. God rest his soul! Had he lived until May, he would have been good for many more stories. I had many new ideas for his birthday celebration, but they're worthless now. I have filed them away for some other day. But in the meantime I'll keep on "scalping" the news, for there's many a dollar there that the other fellows don't seem to want.

It is only possible to be Prometheus when there is need of such a character.—ARPAD SANDOR.

For the Agricultural Publications

Charles H. Chesley

Fresh Light on an Oft-discussed Subject that is of Perennial Interest to Many Writers

I HAVE been writing for agricultural publications for about five years and during that time have received something like fifteen hundred checks from forty-five separate magazines and newspapers.

Although I live up in one corner of our country, periodicals of every section have taken my contributions. However, the agricultural press is largely sectional, conditions in a country of the magnitude of the United States being widely varied in its four corners. What passes for good practice in New York may be quite the opposite in New Mexico. For this reason some of my articles have been of much more than sectional interest.

Of these fifteen hundred checks, the smallest represented the payment for a short item, and was cashed for 75 cents, while the largest was for $35.00, and paid for a series of three articles. I have written a series which ran a year and brought ten dollars each month, and at the present time I am contributing regularly to several publications. Checks are received each month, however, so none of them are large. I say all this not in self-praise, but to establish the fact that I am now writing advisedly.

The greater number of agricultural publications pay after publication, some having a set date, while others have to be reminded. There are perhaps a dozen that pay on acceptance. I find, also, that some of those which formerly paid after publication, now almost invariably send along a check upon receipt of the manuscript. I attribute this to the fact that they have learned to depend upon my work as a regular feature. Of course, I am careful not to send anything to a publication of this kind unless I am pretty sure it is what they want.

It is like this: I have learned the needs of some of my publications and the editors have learned what I can do. Naturally, our mutual understanding works to the benefit of both sides.

Answering what I assume is the first question to arise in the mind of the reader, I am able to write all this agricultural stuff because I have a sound knowledge of agricultural methods and practices. I

was brought up on a farm, but many other writers have had the same training, so that is not the whole of it. I had some little knack of putting words together even as a youngster. I also had a decade of business training, then I came back to the farm to live.

Here you have the whole story: I am a farmer, so the things I write about are the things I know about. I would not attempt to write upon a subject unless I had at least a working knowledge of it.

Oh, yes, I write other things besides farm stuff. There is the matter of good roads, for instance. I dispose of articles each year on highway subjects, but each summer I put in several months in charge of a crew of road builders. Naturally, I am merely turning the practical experiences I have gained into checks. Then, some of the school publications have not been adverse to my work. Well, I have been a school administrator for fifteen years, and was a rural teacher earlier. I would indeed be a dull scholar if I had not learned something about schools.

I mention these things to prove that the first essential for successful writing is a deep knowledge of the subject you are writing about. In fact, I find that it is a good plan to mention my years of practical experience, when sending an article to a new editor. This is not done in a boastful way, but simply as a means of acquainting him with my qualifications to write upon the subject. An editor likes to know that his contributors know what they are talking about.

Returning to the question of agricultural publications, I refer to them in this way because agriculture is divided into so many different classes. For instance, we have poultry journals, dairy publications, sheep and hog magazines, as well as general stock and farm publications. Then we have magazines devoted to gardening, to flower growing, to fruit growing, not to mention those given over to special crops, pigeons, rabbits, black foxes, milch goats and other such subjects. In the poultry field, there are publications devoted to a particular breed, so the field of agricultural writing is almost unlimited. I will say, also, that practically every one of the various publications stands ready to purchase anything particularly suited to its needs.

Of general farm publications, circulating over the entire country, there are but few. Country Gentleman, Farm Journal and Farm & Fireside are at the top of this class. They publish all kinds of farm stuff, pay upon acceptance and rank with the best magazines as markets for material. However, the general writer stands but a small chance with them, because experience has taught them that anything in particular which they may happen to want must be done by an expert.

Of general farm weeklies, many of them have a state name attached to them. Naturally, anything coming from within its own particular territory stands the best chance of acceptance with one of these publications. I suppose the

editor figures that it is more likely to be right in detail than something coming from another part of the country.

A few of the state weeklies specialize in write-ups of successful farmers. All of them like to get an article of this sort if it deals with a farmer in the home territory. An outstanding case might find space in one of the papers of national scope. In this connection it should be stated that the poultry magazines like articles of this kind, with pictures to show the buildings, the flocks and the farmer himself.

This is the field most suited to the general writer. You might write up a farm even if you do not happen to know the technical side of farming.

However, the bulk of my own writing has dealt with this technical side. Editors like to get "how to do" articles, if they feel that they are getting them from someone who knows the "how". I write a good many articles for poultry magazines, but I keep poultry so I know what I am writing about.

Sometimes a telegram will come in reading something like this: "Rush 2,000 words on brooding chicks". Again, I will get a letter asking for three or four articles on assigned subjects. This proves to me that the editors have some confidence in my ability to deliver the goods. However, ordered articles are not the rule but the exception in this as in other fields.

I do not wish to discourage anyone who has an ambition to write for the farm press. The point I wish to make is that it will not profit anyone to undertake to do so unless he has a knowledge of farming. To illustrate: Each year I have a garden. I not only grow things for our own use and to sell, but I experiment with the new. As a result, I am able to dispose of several hundred dollars' worth of material to the garden and horticultural magazines each year. Some of the publications that are listed in all the market guides as nonpaying take my stuff almost without looking at it and send along a check at from one-half to one cent a word. I say this because a letter frequently accompanies the check in which the editor states that he has not read the article but is sure it will fit in somewhere. Naturally, this is the result of years of careful dealing with the several markets.

I have a number of editors of this kind on my list in the various fields of agriculture. I could easily write enough to overwhelm them, but I know better. My own common sense tells me how much I can safely send. If they want more they will say so. It is rather satisfying to have an editor of this kind on your list, even if he does pay but half-a-cent a word. It makes one feel as we may imagine Rupert Hughes or Mary Roberts Rhinehart feels.

Publications devoted to a particular branch of agriculture are usually national in scope. It is the farm weeklies, semi-monthlies and a few monthlies which cater to a particular section. This class of publication pays the lowest rates,

although my average from them has been about one-half cent a word. Nearly all of them have a set date for sending out checks and you can depend upon getting your pay at that time. The weeklies usually pay once a month. Monthlies send out checks soon after publication.

I have found agricultural editors very courteous to do business with. Some of them I have pestered with my work month after month, only to get everything back as fast as the mails could bring it. The wonder of it was that a letter, even though a form letter, always accompanied each manuscript. Now some of those same editors telegraph me for stuff. Persistence, coupled with a knowledge of your field and an intelligent study of your markets, will bring results.

My records show that the only money I have lost in five years from a farm publication was in the case of one that went into the hands of a receiver. My claim was filed, but it was a matter of only about twenty dollars and I was a thousand miles from the scene of activities. The consequence was that I lost out. I have had a few bills that were difficult of collection, some being when two publications were merged, but I have lost much more from other class publications than from the agricultural press. Perhaps the reason for this lies in the fact that I have subscribed for practically every publication of this kind I write for, hence a close check-up is kept on all articles published. It pays to do this.

I keep a card index of articles sent out. At the present time, nine-tenths of my articles go out but once. Occasionally I have one that does not sell at all. That shows that I still have something to learn. However, here is a case in point: An article entitled, "Feeding for Winter Eggs", is sent to an Ohio publication. It comes back in about two weeks. It goes out to a Michigan paper, and again comes back in due time. It is then sent to a Wisconsin publication, comes back, and a New York paper is tried. By the time it has made four or five trips it is too late to be timely for any of them, so the effort must be set down as a total loss. Perusing the current copies of these different publications, it is usually found that an article upon the same subject had reached the editors just ahead of mine, in each case. Some of the editors were kind enough to tell me so.

Obviously, the amount of really dead matter can be reduced as one learns the ropes. The "green" writer might send out the above-mentioned article in January, but I learned long ago that November is a safer date. However, the editors of farm weeklies evidently do not like to lay in a lot of manuscripts which they cannot use for a long time. There is a psychological moment, and our job is to find it. For the larger garden and outdoor monthlies, we must send in the copy six months ahead; for other monthlies and semi-monthlies, three or four; and for the weeklies, from two weeks to two months before publication.

In addition to the regular farm publications, home monthlies use articles upon gardening and poultry subjects. Sunday newspapers frequently feature garden and poultry stuff. These classes of publications pay better rates than the ordinary sectional farm press.

To the aspiring young writer I will say that the farm field is by no means one to be despised. If you have a knowledge of farm and outdoor subjects, here is an opportunity to pick up a few checks to keep the pot boiling. Write as well as you are able to, for farm editors know good English. Do not attempt to "put something over" about which you know nothing. It simply cannot be done.

A camera is useful in this kind of writing. Many an article which otherwise would not be salable "goes" because of a picture accompanying it. The picture, also, will add fifty cents or a dollar to the check. The larger general publications use a great number of pictures. Poultry magazines also use them in profusion.

One who reads the agricultural publications will note that there are very few writers who specialize in this class of writing. You can count on the fingers of your hands the men and women who contribute the bulk of the articles published by the poultry magazines. In the general field there are more, each section having its own writers. I have seen a few names that have afterwards appeared in other forms of writing, so it was evident that writing for the farm press served as a stepping-stone to better things.

My own work for the agricultural press has been largely of a technical nature. Practically all of these publications have home departments. Women writers will find these pages a fruitful field for their endeavor.

Some farm publications also purchase poetry, humor and stories. This is especially true of those having a national circulation. My first contribution to a farm publication was a poem, for which I received the sum of $1.20. Most of the weeklies print a continued story, using the second rights. As a special field for the story writer the agricultural press is therefore not a fruitful one.

The fact-story is always in demand, and this line of effort may well prove attractive to the aspiring writer. Get your facts correct, in every case. General statements may go in the "how" story, but not in the fact-story.

Finally, as advice to the would-be writer for the farm press, do not expect to ride in a Packard right away, if you are depending upon your earnings to get the price. You cannot expect to average more than one-half cent per word for what you sell. When you deduct that which does not sell at all, your average will be even less. You would have to wear out a typewriter every year to make as much as a good plumber.

Help From the Editor

F. Allison Barton

To Regard the Editor as an Enemy Is to Lose the Chance of Making Him Your Friend

"MY, what a hard-hearted lot those editor-folks are!" mutters the struggling young writer as he gets another rejection slip with one of his returned brain-children. And he or she sits down and wonders whether the game is worth the candle, or the midnight oil, or the extra kilowatts expended in the bringing forth of the brain-baby.

But editors are not hard-hearted. First of all, they are human; then they are business-men — or business women. It is their business to get the best they can for their magazines commensurate with the prices their publishers can afford to pay. If in a manuscript submitted they see signs of promise, they are impelled, from absolutely personal motives, to follow that sign just as a prospector will follow traces of gold. It is literary gold the good editor is looking for.

When once your manuscripts have become reasonably interesting, and promise to become more so, then the keen eye of the discerning editor sits up and takes notice.

"Here," he says, "are signs of literary gold. Let's follow them up and see where they lead."

So he wipes the sweat from his brow (for editors *do* sweat, mind you), and types a short note which the young writer, if he knew, would treasure, for the study of these notes may be guide-posts to success.

There is part of an old song that goes,

> "Here's the very note:
> This is what he wrote;"

and these are some of the "very notes" editors have taken time to pen to the writer.

Says one, "You have failed to make this story probable. It contains too much coincidence."

Now isn't there a mighty good bit of advice in that? What interest can there be in a story that is palpably only an invention and devoid of probability? Let's take that bit of advice to heart, then, and create our stories more within the bounds of probability. As to coincidences—well, they do happen in real life. But it is worth noting that actual reality, when put on paper, frequently has the appearance of unreality. Cut away from unmotivated coincidence, then.

"Leave out profanity," says another editor. And the writer nev-

er inserted another "damn" in a manuscript sent to that gentleman. Even the stories that appeal to the man who "calls a spade a spade" need not refer to that ditch-digging tool as a "damned old shovel." Tone down the cuss-words.

In contrast to the foregoing one editor writes me, "Don't use so damned many italics in your stuff. You ought to be able to place emphasis without it." He did, in his personal correspondence.

"Too long-drawn-out," says another friendly editor. "Make it shorter and I'll consider it. The steam's lost in the boiler." There's a regular sermon for short-story writers in that last sentence. "The steam's lost in the boiler." No pressure. No pep. Boiler's too big for the amount of steam: consequently no power. How many writers, young and old, have spoiled a good story by making it too lengthy. Compression in short-story writing cannot be over-emphasized, for it assuredly makes for strength.

Another gentleman of the unjustly dreaded blue-pencil advised me, in regard to a manuscript, to "hide its bones." Here, you see, was a manuscript the reverse of the one just cited. It hadn't flesh enough on it to hide the framework. Wasn't it Aristotle who spoke of "the golden mean"? Well, in regard to writing, "the golden mean" must be sought. Too much of this or too little of that, and the story is spoiled. It takes much work and great discernment to strike the middle path, or, to work back to the former metaphor, to proportion the amount of boiler-space to the amount of steam-pressure. Right in accord with this editor's sentiments was that of the one who wrote me that a certain story of mine was too thin.

"This yarn is too trite." My, what a punch in the solar plexus that was! And I had prided myself on the story's originality! It's difficult, extremely difficult, to get away from the *obviously* trite. There is, as someone has observed many times, nothing new under the sun. The best we can do is to hide the commonplace under the cloak of romance, and see to it that the cloak is of an unusual pattern or color. There are millions of intricate patterns to be woven into such an outer garment. Weave an attractive pattern in the cloak, wrap it around some commonplace —and note the difference. Editors in the course of their lives read masses of fictional stuff that is unattractively clothed. To illustrate: Dress your work-a-day clerk in a red plush suit and you immediately remove him from the commonplace,—especially if you set him amongst a group of his fellows clothed in conservative grays or blacks. Take off his gorgeous raiment and set him back in the same crowd and he's lost. This, of course, is by way of illustration only. It does not mean that you can make a man an interesting personality by dressing him thus. However, he may have certain traits of character which, accentuated, will hide his otherwise common-place character.

"A poor story mighty well

written," was the gentle jab administered by a friendly editor. Now, when you get a note of that kind it is encouraging. It shows that you have the power to write if you can only get the right kind of material on which to exercise that power. (Might I here, in parentheses, say that the H. C. S. courses prove of great assistance to the young writer in discovering himself. I speak from experience.)

And now let me give one of the greatest and most valuable tips I have received with the rejection slips, which still come to me—although usually in the form of personal letters. Here it is: "The motivation is not strong enough nor clear enough." Right there many a novice falls down—and so do his character creations. They move, yes: but no one knows what motives impel them to move thus and so. Their actions are insufficiently motivated. They cry without being hurt; they hate without reason; they love without cause; they plot with no motivating purpose. The writer must give a strong enough motive for his characters' acting as they do. Let him consider more closely the reason for his story-people's performing as he makes them perform, and let him be sure that his readers *understand,* while not telling them openly just WHY they act as they do. It would be as well for every beginner to have constantly before his mind's eye that one three-letter word, colored red: WHY? Then he would not forget that there must be purpose in every move and every speech of his character-creations.

The foregoing hints are helps the writer has received from the editors, and he passes them along to his fellow scribblers with the hope that they may prove as valuable to them as they have to himself.

If these hints are acted upon, then it is within the bounds of probability that another hint may be sent along to the aspirant for literary honors, a hint that betokens editorial satisfaction.

Authors' Guide

Bad Negro—Always "burly."
Hero—"Frank, open face."
Crook—"Eyes narrowed to slits."
Heroine—"Straight and supple as a boy."
Bad Lady—"Half-closed, heavy-lidded eyes."
Dog—"Keenly alert—almost human."
Envelope—Stamped, self-addressed for return "in case of rejection."—WILLIAM SANFORD, in *Judge.*

The Christmas Short Story

Ada Melville Shaw

When Days Grow Warm in the North it is Time for the Story Writer to Finish His Christmas Story and a Former Managing Editor Speaks Her Mind About It

AS WITH all else in this fluent age of an eternally fluent world, so with taste and style in Christmas fiction: "The old order changeth."

I have been an editor for over thirty years, and for many more than that have shared camp with the free-lancers. My editorial job for the past decade, has been, in part, to choose suitable fiction for the columns committed to my care —columns read principally by a conservative and rather serious type of women. In this decade, perhaps my most dreaded responsibility — strange anomaly! — has been that of procuring suitable Christmas fiction. Christmas stories are legion—suitable Christmas stories as scarce as albino robins.

Ninety-nine per cent of the short-stories submitted for publication in the Christmas issues of the magazine to which I have referred have been, to state it with the utmost gentleness and consideration, "impossible." True, they carried Christmas titles—example: "For Unto Us A Child Is Born"—and they offered a more or less happy choice of Christmas terminology; but as to the real value or appropriateness of their content, "least said, soonest mended."

When I was a young writer Christmas was my free-lancer's harvest time. It was easy in those simple-hearted days to write saleable Christmus stuff, at least for a certain type of magazine. All one had to do—and in what I am about to say there is no whit of irreverence toward Christmas and all that it stands for in itself—was to "get into the Christmas spirit." This meant that you must be able to visualize, weeks—or months—ahead of time (for juveniles), stockings and bythechimneywithcare, candy and candles, jolly and Dolly and holly, jelly and "belly", skates and snow and sleds. You had to be more or less deft at flinging over all the bright glamour of Star and Song and Shepherds, with tender references to the Child who lay couched "in the hay", and at mingling with all, or using as a telling climax, just the right number (*quantum sufficit*) and choice of Bible quotations, the narrative according to Luke being the most useful. For the older readers you rang the changes on Baskets for the Poor,

Carols sung at Midnight, the Christmas Sermon as a heart-changer of the Scrooges, the Family Gathering, the Dying Mother who confided her Baby—but you must spell it "Babe" at Christmas time—said Babe being born, of course, on Christmas Eve, with the beam of a Star (upper-case S) slanting through the frost- covered windowpane, to the up-to-this-hour stony-hearted Rich Relation or Erring Father, who is thereby touched to tears and—decency.

In those days, Christmas On The Farm was a story always saleable, if you put in plenty of sleigh bells, lots of snow (forgetting in how many snowless lands the Christ or his prototype is revered), a for-some-reason pathetic mother, an empty chair, turkey and fixin's, and so on.

Then there were the love tales—Lovers who had quarreled and met and made up, or who awoke to the grand passion under the Christmas stars, or beside the Christmas Tree, or holding hands at church on Christmas morning; Soldiers or Sailors who came back from exile gaunt and wistful but surcharged with the spirit-of-Christmas; Prodigal Sons and Silly Wandering Daughters who sought the Home Roof just in time to get a wing or leg of the piping hot turkey or goose (plenty of sage dressing, Mr. Dickens!); the Little Match Girl, and her offset, the Lame Newsboy, whom you rescued before their untimely perishing in a Christmas Eve snow storm by some gentle Greatheart cleverly described so that the reader is not *quite* sure that it may not have been the lowly Nazarene Himself who had taken on earthly form for the sake of this "little one;"—in fact, if you could make the reader think for a moment that perhaps such a miracle *did* happen and that *you* knew about it and were considerately veiling for purposes of publication, its super-glory, then indeed you had "done" a real Christmas story!

The late John G. Woolley (of early prohibition fame) asked me to write a "good" Christmas story for The New Voice, of which he was then owner and editor. "Pack it full of Christmas," he instructed me in his always genial fashion; "put in lots of evergreens and music and holly and stars and candles and Yule fires." I did. I almost measured and weighed the color and fragrance and melody of the traditional Christmas so as to be sure the pack was adequate. And, since I was writing for a temperance periodical, I had to create a drunken wretch and convert him from his cups by the magic of Christmas day as then "kept". The great Temperance Chief of those days liked it and printed it. It had no particular reference to Jesus of Nazareth, it was but a *Christmas* story!

Today—this marvellous Now of a more-than-marvellous age—the taste and thought-trend of readers of even so transient a bit of literature as the Christmas Short-Story

demands a treatment deeper, higher, more truth- and meaning-full than the tales just described. Children whose fathers and brothers sail the skies in air ships, boys and girls who make their own radio sets and listen in on the voices of a world, are no longer captured by

" 'Twas the night before Christmas

And all through the house—;"

girls who caper to their desks in quick Charleston movement while humming the latest dance-song, do not know anything about the style of hosiery that the girls of my youth "hung by the chimney with care", modern hosiery is too frail and sophisticated for any such old-stuff use. Community chests, Big Brothers, commercialized Santa Clauses who visit the towns and see to it that every child gets into the office his or her statement of dreams and needs—all these see to it that the Little Match Girls and the Lame Newsies and the Forsaken Mothers and all the rest of forlorn (*verloren*) humanity are not left to the sporadic impulses of the once-a-year "Christmas spirit". Also, the commercial rush of the modern world during the weeks preceding Christmas—would it not be better to say merely December Twenty Five?—is not a convenient setting for lovering stuff.

As for the older folk, they have been through the Great War, are anxiously watching the Old World and its unrest, and are asking tremendously deep questions, and not merely dreaming pretty childish dreams. We still enjoy Christmas carols, but we are out for Christian Courage, or Pagan Pluck, to enable us to work out the calculus of practical life: we have no time for and but little interest in the merely traditional trappings that time has hung about the Bible narrative of Jesus of Nazareth. *We are looking for the real thing.*

For these reasons and others, the old style of Christmas fiction is outworn, and because I know by personal experience how much of it is still being written, but not sold, I wish I could reach the ear of every young free-lancer with this statement. It would save him time and stamps and stationery and disappointment, and save the editors—O ye gods of things as they ought to be—how much of empty weariness!

Speaking from the triple standpoint of reader, writer and editor, I feel sure of my ground when I declare that there is a greater place than ever there was in the past for Christmas short fiction; BUT—it must be GREATER fiction than we wrote or read in the past, and written from a great impulse. A truly sincere story, well written, is its own *open sesame* to any magazine that uses that type of fiction and is worthy of its place in the sun.

And surely the theme of Christmas is the greatest of themes. How it has been belittled—commercialized! And I ask my great company of confreres, the free-lancers in fiction, this direct question:

Since Christmas Day is "kept" because a Man who has come to be called the Christ was born at the approximate date December 25, A. D. 1 (or 4, or however the calendarists figure it out) should not the so-called Christmas story bear more or less on the story of the Christ Himself or His Life in the body, and His work in the world ever since His birth?

Does not the entire trouble, O fellow scribes, lie here: that we *write to sell;* are not impelled to creative effort by any vital personal interest in the tremendous Fact that put Christmas on the calendar? Have we then no convictions concerning Christmas - in - itself? Have we no real inspiration to pass on to others? No message? No appeal other than that of the traditional trappings of the popular celebration which now—so far as any general recognition of its Glorious Founder is concerned—might almost as well be held to mark the Fourth of July or the End of the World War as the birthday of Mary's Son?

I am not speaking for dogma or denominationalism of any slant or shade. He whose Name, by common assent through the centuries, has come to be "the Christ", looms vaster than any confining walls of opinion about Him. Whether we regard Him as Divine or Human, Humanly Divine, or Divinely Human, is a personal matter, when it comes to writing a Christmas story for hundreds and thousands of readers of all shades of thought. The thing is to have the mind charged with some adequate conception of what that Life has done for the race, and let this be the Light shining through the warp and woof of our tales.

Since Mary bore her Son in the cattle shelter of old Bethlehem and "laid him in a manger", perhaps there has been no period when readers so generally are willing—if not positively eager—to read and consider suggestions high and beautiful that have their roots in the *fact* of Jesus of Nazareth. We who are facing the job of just living are mentally and spiritually hungry, we are seeking a Beauty that will not fade, values that will not depreciate, foundations that will not crumble, spirituality that is not a vanishing haze;—in short, to use the catch phrase of the hour, we are "looking for the answer." Cannot Christmas fiction do something for us? I think it can. I think it should. But I know that it cannot and I know it will not unless the fact of Christmas itself already has done something very real for those who write about it.

If, free-lancers, Christmas means no more to you than a hectic mixture of rush and shopping and overeating, showers of cards, ropes of evergreen, snatches of song over the radio, a choir's service in church, shine of candles, merry (and at the last hours, wearisome) shouting of greetings, midnight dancing, gifts coveted, gifts grudged, gifts assembled by dint of sweat of brow and squeeze of purse, the whole overlaid and un-

derlaid and shot through with a suppressed or outspoken wish that it were well over until another year;—if all this be true, then, free-lancers, you have no Christmas story worth writing.

If, on the other hand, you somehow have caught a high glimpse of the majesty of that Life which began heralded by angels and housed with cattle, and yet has found no diminishment of power and grace —if that Life, as it has touched and molded countless lives down through the centuries, means more to you than a "tale that is told", then you may dare to charge your pens with Beauty and Wonder, Tenderness and Holy Courage, Humility and Greatness, Sacrifice and Service, Mother Love and Angelic Rapture, Heavenly Mysticism and Earthly Veneration and—write a real Christmas story.

A New Camera Idea

John Hammond Churchill

Telling about a New Type of Small Hand-Camera Using Motion-Picture Film

SOME cherished hand-camera traditions have recently been upset. The familiar, compact, folding-bellows, press-the-button hand machine used to be thought just about the most convenient camera for all-around use that could be designed.

For the writer who uses a camera at irregular intervals and makes but a limited number of pictures all told, this compact camera may still be the most satisfactory. But there are some things that it will not do.

It will not, for example, take a quick never-to-occur-again shot without opening and focussing. To be sure, it can be snapped into position rapidly, yet the fact remains that its eye is frequently not ready at the most crucial times. Again, the film cartridge permits but six exposures without refilling. The tendency, with such a camera, is to restrict decidedly the number of exposures.

Since the films and paper for a large number of good-sized prints are expensive, and the operator always wants to save his remaining exposures for the most important shots, he frequently omits snapping little bits of everyday life of the highest genre interest while taking twice over the "Entrance to Mammoth Cave" that he can buy on perfectly good postcards two for five.

This is an extreme case, assuredly, yet it does represent the disgusted experience of some writers

who are now using with grateful success an entirely new type of hand-camera. In fact, this new type of record camera—it is designed, in other words, to make quick, accurate, complete visual records—embodies an entirely new idea in picture-taking.

The camera itself is as small as one of the smaller folding cameras, but it does not fold. It is a lightweight box with a spyglass finder, ready to take fifty exposures at eye level at one loading. This is made possible by the use of regular motion-picture film, costing about one cent a "shot".

The film is put up in ingenius daylight loading cartridges, each of the fifty exposure-sections exactly the size of one motion-picture "frame". It is not necessary to take all the fifty pictures without stopping. When pictures to any number less than the total have been taken, the back of the camera may be taken off and the exposed part of the film removed.

The size of the individual "records" is quite small, about 3/4 by 5/8 inches. The negative roll may be used after development in three ways. Strip prints may be made for a small notebook album, thus giving a complete exposure record; larger prints, 2¼ x 3¼ or 3¼ x 4¼, can be made by means of a special printing machine of those pictures of which enlargement is desirable; or the negative strip may be optionally printed on positive motion-picture film so that the pictures may be shown in series as "stills" with a stereopticon, using the developed and fixed film instead of lantern slides.

One of the important advantages of such a camera is its speed in photographing moving objects. The distance from the lens and shutter to the exposure surface is short, and the illumination through the lens, small as the lens is, is great. Consequently, even though these cameras are of moderate price, they are fast. A shutter speed of 1/25 second is equivalent in recording objects in motion to a speed of 1/100 second with a 2¼ x 3¼ camera. It is understood that there will soon be placed on the market a new series of these cameras with extremely fast lenses. The present series, however, will answer all practical purposes.

Many writers and illustrators are now using these small cameras for sketch-book notes, obviating verbal notes to a large extent. The sketchbooks so made lack the bulkiness of regular-size print albums and have the further advantage of booking a large number of impressions in complete continuity.

There is increasing use of everyday about-town pictures in the newspapers. Reporters can, with a small record camera, supplement the work of staff-photographers in an efficient way. In emergencies, the records so taken are invaluable. Trade-paper journalists will find this new camera a real book on account of its ease, quickness and small cost of operation.

Reaching Out for Trade Journal Material

Leslie E. Dunkin

I.

Here Is Unfolded a Definite Workable Plan for Using Newspapers as a Source for Trade-Journal Material

NO COMMUNITY—rural or urban—is so small but what the energetic trade-journal writer can reach out for material, bringing it to his door. His qualifications need not be geographical, for they are his ability to recognize valuable trade-journal material, and his willingness and aptness to take care of it after it has been brought to his desk. Much of this can be done without the writer's leaving his typewriter. Uncle Sam's postal service and the daily newspapers are his office or errand boys.

The writer should not limit himself to the newspaper of his own town or community as a source of news material but search newspapers from other towns. No writer has a copyright on the trade-journal news and ideas in any one community. For example, I have gained a large amount of trade-journal news and ideas from the newspaper of a city in the county adjoining the one in which my home town is, even though another active trade-journal writer lives there and works the field himself. Whoever first gets the news or the idea and works it up best for the trade-journal editors is the one to receive the check. There are so many different periodicals buying material that duplications seldom happen. The other writer does not know what I am preparing and I do not know what he is preparing, so we are not playing unfair with the editors.

Care must be taken in building up the newspaper source, for the writer can easily get a white elephant on his hands financially and physically. As with every other line of work, the safest plan is to start on a small scale and gradually let the volume of the business bring about the growth.

The writer's first task is to select the best towns. Working one town at a time is the most satisfactory. The medium-sized town or small city will be more profitable for the writer than the large city or the small town. The nearest medium-sized town will make a good beginning. The trade-paper writer may find it necessary later to make a hasty trip for completing some of his material, hence the closer the town the better it will

be for his pocket-book and his time.

By consulting his local newspaper office the writer can find the names of the newspapers published in any desired town. Ten cents in stamps will bring several different current editions of these newspapers, but it should be remembered that the Saturday or Sunday editions are not fair samples, and that in many instances the Monday edition is below the average.

A comparison of the different newspapers published will reveal which one will give the writer the larger number of ideas and news material. Occasionally the sample copies will show that the town would better be left until later. If this should prove to be true, the writer can then try another town for the first subscription. Since samples at their best are rather uncertain, the writer will do well to subscribe for the shortest time permitted by the newspaper for his first subscription. If this proves profitable, the subscription can be placed on a yearly basis. I have always found that the sample papers give me ideas enough for articles that more than furnish the money for the short subscription. Then the short subscription and each annual subscription furnish ideas and news that brings in subscription money and a fat bonus besides.

As soon as one town has been established as a profitable source of trade-paper news, the writer can turn to other towns and small cities in his part of the state. He will find it a wise policy to rotate the subscriptions of his papers. By watching the time when the subscriptions are started, he can have a subscription to come due each month rather than a large number in the same month. This will equalize the expense.

The newspaper should be tested for its trade-journal possibilities rather than for its general news-contents or its attractiveness. Frequently the less attractive newspaper will have greater trade-journal possibilities for the distant writer than the leading publication of the community.

In addition to the trade-journal possibilities, the writer has a field before him to become the news correspondent for the newspapers in the larger towns or cities near his community. If this has been provided for, the writer has the opportunity for feature articles for the large city newspapers, with local color in the communities represented by the newspapers that come to the writer each day. This work may be run as a sideline.

The trade-periodical writer needs to keep a check each month on the different newspapers that come to him for the work. If any newspaper does not each month at least pay the expense of the annual subscription, or, better still, realize a good profit for the writer, he will do well to consider changing newspapers for that town, or possibly changing the town. So each paper should be an asset every month.

A change in the trade-journal

markets or their policies may make a change of paper or town necessary. A subscription to one paper may not prove to be a loss, yet the writer may find that another paper from the same community or from another town will bring larger profits. Hence a change will be a wise move.

A simple checking plan—that will suit him best personally—can be devised by the writer. As for my own method, I wrote the names of the different newspapers on a "clean" sheet of paper each month. During the month, I would jot down the number of articles or news items gained from each publication. With the sheet in a convenient place, little time was spent in checking the papers from month to month.

The writer will have to be careful or he will waste much valuable time reading the papers each day. He must remember that he cannot read them as he would read his local newspaper for the news of interest to him. He must learn to scan the columns hastily, training his eye to catch trade-journal news items and ideas for possible articles, from the advertisements and possibly from the news items. With a little practice he can easily glance over twelve newspapers—a year's rotation of subscriptions—in half an hour, or an hour at the most.

The writer will have to be careful in cutting the papers. His first tendency may be to clip out material that contains no profitable idea. The danger at the other extreme is to overlook an idea that might be developed into profitable material. For example, one advertisement alone may have no idea, yet taken with others that may or might follow it the writer might build up an idea that is profitable. Then, too, one advertisement alone might not disclose a good idea, yet, taken with other similar advertisements of other places of business and in other towns, the advertisement becomes a gem for the writer. The writer will have to depend upon his "nose for news", as the newspapers express it, to decide what is profitable and what not in the material before him.

How To Spot 'Em

Business Men—Their company manners.
Electricians—Their illuminating remarks.
Dry Cleaners—Their pressing invitations.
Editors—Their quick come-backs.
Writers—Their hungry look.

—*Judge.*

Toil of a Year

Archie Joscelyn

An Illuminating Analysis of Twelve Months' Work by a Rising Free Lance

IN GLANCING over my records I find nearly 400 sales recorded for the year 1926. The greater number of these sales comprise articles, in which I have specialized for the past several months, though there are several stories, both of the short and novelette length.

In any such analysis of work accomplished the personal "I" must of course stand out. I make no apology for it in this instance, but am writing this report not for a record of what "I" have done, but rather with the thought that others, mayhap, may find something of profit from a recital of my experiences. Many others in the game have equalled, many exceeded, the record.

The articles, in general, average around 500 words, and this I have found to be a very convenient length in which to express a single thought, and a length favored by the majority of papers that buy the sort of stuff I turn out. The length occasionally drops to 200, and balloons now and again to over a thousand, for the same type; but these extremes are with me unusual.

The articles, in the main, have been for the boys' and girls' papers—the Sunday-school publications and other juvenile markets. The type has ranged from purely inspirational articles and editorials to constructive articles—how to do this or that, camping, outdoors, scenic attractions of the country, and so on.

The sporting and outdoor magazines have also accepted a number of articles. Some of these were prepared especially for the publications which accepted them, but some were written for other classes of publications, but possessing a "slant" that made them of interest to those that finally purchased them.

In speaking of these two classes of publications alone, many people are inclined to believe that the rates paid are so small that one can not make money in writing for them. The rates, of course, do average lower than with many fiction magazines. None the less, one who specializes somewhat in these fields will find the remuneration well worth while for the time spent; and those who supply a paper of this class regularly with

acceptable material frequently receive a much better rate than does the occasional contributor who disposes of his stuff to them only as a last resort—though they do not often take poor stuff any more.

Also, many papers that announce to the average free lance that they are not in the market will frequently buy something that is really adapted to their needs, when it comes in from a writer whom they know something about.

In fiction today, for papers of this class, a motive is desired, along with an entertaining story. Not a moral, please note, but a motive. But in articles for these same papers one may speak frankly and to the point along a chosen subject, with no sugar-coating of a moral. However, the subject must deal with some real problem that the reader is likely to meet with in normal life, and it must be discussed helpfully. For example, how to live with people, getting along in business, and simple psychology, are calculated to interest the average boy or young man.

An idea of some of the subjects covered in my writing for boys and girls and young people may be gleaned from these titles of accepted articles:

"The Fishin' Outfit." "Giving Your Employer Full Value." "Public Speaking." "Today." "Your Mind and Success." "Friendship." "Know Your Job." "Religion in Business Life." "Temper." "Humbleness." "The Choice of a Life Work." "Using Your Public Library." "Drunken Athletes." "Dreams." "Girls and Politics." "The Psychology of Fear." "At Home Outdoors."

I have dwelt at some length on the type of these articles in general to show that there is a varied range—indeed, these have only skimmed the surface of the variety which these publications use. A glance through several different Sunday-school publications will show that other writers are treating many other topics. Almost any article of clean human interest attracts readers of these classes.

Payment is usually on acceptance, or shortly thereafter, and the rates run from a third more to double what these same papers paid a few years ago. The articles can usually be written, as can fiction for these same papers, in odd hours or days of the month, making a profitable side-line for a writer who is capable of filling it.

But not everyone can fill it, of course. It is not particularly difficult, but one must know the field to make anything of it.

In looking over the records, I find a smaller amount of work finally discarded than in years past. This is partly, I suppose, because I am able to turn out better work. But two other reasons have much to do with this fact. One is in seeking a new type of market when one class fails—as an article written for a farm paper and turned down all along the line may go nicely to the sporting magazines, the boys' papers, etc.

The other reason lies in keeping a manuscript traveling so long as there is any market that it might fit. Lots of stuff sells on the first trip, and lots of material goes at just as good a price, to just as good a publication, on the eighth, tenth or twelfth trip—sometimes even higher.

So much for the sales record in regard to articles. Production figures seem to interest most writers. Having done considerable autotouring during the year, as well as taking various other lay-offs, I have spent a little less than two-thirds of the year at writing. The first 11 months show a total of 350,000 words finished—that is, ready for the editor. Some rewriting does not count in this, and neither does some stuff only partially completed.

Comparing the numbers of articles and stories written with the number sold, the ratio is very nearly even, the written slightly overtopping the sold. Many of the "sold", of course, were written the year previously, some even before then. The number of written words is higher in proportion to the number of sold, due to one or two long stories which have yet to "ring the bell."

In titles I note a gradual change in my work. Formerly I used titles averaging perhaps three words. Of late I have found increased effectiveness, both in fiction and in articles, in using shorter titles, often of one word. More may be suggested, I believe, and less told, in such a title than in the longer lengths. Here are a few recent ones used in fiction, which I think illustrate the point:

"Greed." "Restitution." "Desire." "Sunset." And in articles: "Refuge." "Hope." "Talents." "Exams."

This is not a startling record, by any means, but the work was pleasant, and of a highly instructive sort. When one does that sort of writing he must delve into many fields of knowledge, and the gain is manifest when it comes to writing fiction for the adult magazines.

Everyone who has given the matter any thought, knows of the great literary value of the Bible and the broad culture, aside from its religious aspect, that comes from a general familiarity with it. Although it has been the subject of most careful and painstaking study for hundreds of years, its most thorough students find in it a constant revelation of new thoughts and new ideals which minister to the spiritual nature of the race.—CALVIN COOLIDGE.

Mexico, As I See the People

Kathleen E. Houston

International Prejudices are Fostered in Ways Little Suspected by Writers Who Do Not Take Pains to Be Exact as well as Sympathetic

THE manner in which the Mexican or Mexican-Spanish language is abused in stories written supposedly by persons on the border, or even elsewhere, is almost criminal. The Mexican—and I shall call him that, for we very seldom have stories dealing with Spain or the Spanish people—are sensitive and a great many who live in border and interior towns read all the short-stories and articles they find in the magazines at the news stands —if Mexico is mentioned.

It is the short-story that is particularly dangerous to the beginner in this foreign field. He has heard a few such terms as *"No sabe"*, and thinks that to use them covers a multitude of omissions, whereas he really shows his ignorance when he uses a Spanish expression in the wrong place.

"No sabe" means, "He does not know." It has no connection with "I do not know", as it is so commonly used, by careless writers.

The Mexican loves his country as much as the American loves his. He is not Spanish and resents being called Spanish. Of course there are some Mexicans living in the United States who through force of necessity have called themselves Spanish to avoid ostracism, when in reality the upper-class Mexican is as brilliant and well educated as the upper-class Spaniard or American. The American, however, has set thoughtlessly a standard that has hurt the sensitive feelings of the Latin-blooded Mexican, and for business reasons the latter at times calls himself a Spaniard, although it hurts to do so.

To illustrate my point: The other day the two daughters of the Mexican customs collector in a border town took their beautiful Maltese cat to the veterinary in the nearby American city. He asked the girls if they cared to return each day to look after the cat, to which they replied that they lived too far away, and would return every second or third day. He was impressed by their obvious wealth and cultivation, for they had driven up in a luxurious limousine. They were also exceptionally pretty, and graduates of an exclusive girls' college in California.

He inquired where they lived, since they could not return each

day. They mentioned the little city across the border.

"What," he exclaimed, "you live in ————————?"

"Yes."

"Why, what nationality are you, that you must live there?"

"Mexican," replied one of the girls with dignity.

"Oh, surely you mean Spanish," he said.

The young woman by this time was hurt, and she returned rather spiritedly, "Are you English?"

"No," he told her, "I am American."

"Well, we fought Spain in 1810 and whipped them just as thoroughly as you whipped England a few years earlier. Why call us Spanish? We are Mexican."

He was thoroughly silenced.

A few of the commoner expressions used in stories are: *"No se"*, meaning, "I do not know." *"¿Quien sabe?"* meaning "Who knows?" It is used when the official knows, but does not care to tell all the state secrets — and in a general way to give a noncommittal answer.

A story may be made ridiculous by the wrong use of a Christian name. One of the leading American magazines for women not long ago printed a series of stories which were very good, with this exception — one of the girls was named "Jesus"! This was an unfortunate choice, for that name is no more common among Mexican girls than the name Henry or Charles is common as a girl's name in an American home. It ruined the story for a group of people who would have enjoyed them had it not been for the ignorant misuse of a name.

Another common mistake is to locate the wrong tribe of Indians in the wrong state. If one is writing about the Yaquis, for goodness' sake put them in Sonora, while if writing about the Taramares, who are a nation of runners, put them in the state of Chihuahua.

It is such little deviations as these that mar or actually spoil an otherwise good story which is based on life in another country. It is all right for the ignorant cowboy to say *"no sabe"*, but please don't put it into the mouth of a Mexican, whether peon or landowner.

Foley Safeguards Boston Morals

And I will be . . . . ready to spread the alarm
Through every Middle——, village and farm.

—F. P. A. in *New York World.*

From the Brown Owl's Oak

Discharging the static

Your manuscript contains some good and pungent turns of idea and expression, and represents the rather vigorous reaction of personal views. We are sorry to have to report nevertheless that we fear it is not a kind of writing easy to place for publication, as it comes so near to being confined to the expression of merely individual mood and reactance.

We all know how much satisfaction there is, when we are provoked, in a good hearty swear-word or a cutting remark or in slamming the pans around in the sink. They are a means of letting off steam or discharging an over-accumulation of static electricity. We rather suspect that what you have written was written to serve the same purpose.

There is satisfaction in letting off the electricity, but after the spark has snapped "that's all there is, there isn't any more." The trouble with these smaller static accumulations is, that they are so quickly discharged and that the current hasn't voltage enough to operate a meat grinder or keep the lamp-bulb lighted. Your "spark" is strong and snappy, and if you could keep these accumulations feeding into a storage-battery (thus "trickle-charging" the reservoir of energy) you would bottle up voltage sufficient for practical working-purposes of one sort or another—humor, or satire, or constructive comment or criticism, and so on.

A letter from the editor

Besides suggesting so clearly the kind of "twist" desirable in all the articles his magazine prints, the following letter from the editor of Current History will be interesting to beginners as a concrete example of editorial practice; and reading it may lead some of the experienced to wish that some of the editors they know would season the transaction of editorial business more with courtesy and less with—well, with those editors' kind of manners.

We are very much interested in your article on ———————— and desire to print it in the October number, but I am writing to ask whether it would not be possible for you to insert a paragraph or two at the beginning to give it more historical character so as to justify its appearance in the Current

History Magazine, which is devoted, so far as it is compatible with the necessary treatment of the topic, to objective, contemporary history.

Our thought is that in the opening paragraph you would trace in the briefest terms the origin of the new trend which has given rise to the development which you so ably assail. I am only suggesting two or three hundred words as a historical perspective for the treatment which follows. Perhaps the economic and social changes in the last quarter of a century have had influence on this development. The group which is the object of your comment has arisen only within the last fifteen or twenty years; in fact the most conspicuous members of that cult were entirely unknown ten or fifteen years ago. I believe that the article would be much more appropriate to our magazine with an introduction of this character to give it, in the vernacular, a historical "squint."

We should be pleased if, notwithstanding the addition you will make in the introduction, you could reduce to some extent the length of the manuscript. We find that in order to insert the desirable variety of matter within the physical limitations of our publication, articles ought to be limited as a maximum to 4000 words, and we very much prefer that they be kept within 3500 words.

If we receive the revised MS before the middle of next month, it will be in time.

Thanking you for giving us the opportunity of reading this article, and awaiting your favorable reply, we remain,

This way, l-a-d-e-e-s an' gent'men, r-i-g-h-t t-h-i-s w-a-y

The stupidity of censorship crusades as practical means of getting rid of undesirable stage pieces was illustrated in the recent outbreak of crusading in New York City.

A play of no particular good taste or artistic merit was about to close; the regular playgoing public did not care for it and it was at the last gasp.

But three or four days before the time set for its withdrawal, the "crusaders" had it raided. This advertised it to the curious and prurient among the buyers and butter-and-egg men, to the want-to-be-shocked out-of-towners and other sensation-seeking visitors, and to the like classes among New Yorkers themselves, as a show they ought to see if they wanted something racy.

Attendance jumped; the S. R. O. sign went up; the management fought the closing order; the show stayed open.

The show was expiring from inanition. Stupid agitation revived it and prolonged its life for months.

An old, old experience had repeated itself yet again. Agitators and crusaders never learn.

"And you takes yer choice"

"Hell!" exclaimed the Duchess, spitting out the word and her cigaret as with one foot she kicked De Courcemont from the room and with the other adjusted the train of the court robe in which she was about to answer the King's imperious summons.

The Owl doesn't recall the exact wording of the classic burlesque example of the "punch opening," but the example that he has manufactured (beginning with the same

words) perhaps doesn't differ much from the original except in being a bit more low-comedy in tone.

Tried by the standard touchstones, this opening will be found to plunge at once into action, to introduce leading persons and intimate their character and to "plant" the appearance of yet another, to suggest situation, to prepare for the quick succession of the next scene, to indicate place and setting, and to strike the "key note" for the narrative to come.

It is in the tone of this key note or chord that the burlesque lies. Let idea and particulars be kept on this side of the line where the ridiculous begins, and the tone will have been set for a story of different purpose and mood—probably for a story of romance, of plot, of adventure, perhaps of melodrama, not a narrative of mocking imitation.

The punch that fails

It is obvious that for a good many stories of romance, plot, adventure, or melodrama, a beginning of the emphatic, or attention-striking, kind may be peculiarly suitable. We assume of course that both story and beginning shall be handled with judicious restraint. It is exaggeration in them, resulting from undeveloped taste, undeveloped judgment, and undeveloped skill, that provokes us to seize on such stories and by exaggerating their exaggeratedness turn them to ridicule. An attempt without the ability or skill to be sensational nearly always *is* ludicrous.

But when the apprentice writer realizes the caution here implied against use of startling beginnings, he is likely to feel as if he were facing a long-horn steer. He cannot "duck," and whichever way he dodges he seems certain to hook himself on the prong of a dilemma. He has long ago been warned against the "introduction" and now he is warned against the "punch beginning." The one kills interest; the other provokes rude laughter. What are poor apprentices to do?

If it fits it's right

But no dilemma is there, snorting and tossing its horns at him, for he is under no compulsion to write either a punch beginning or else an introduction; he is free to write any kind of opening whatever, provided that it is appropriate to the story and starts it off naturally; nothing more is necessary but for the opening to give the reader the feeling, "this reads as if it's going to be worth while."

When we counsel the apprentice writer to begin with "something that will strike the reader's attention and get the story going promptly," we probably should add "if you know what I mean." The apprentice may not know—but it is his business to find out. "There are nine-and-fifty ways of beginning tribal lays" and any other narrative, "and every one of them is right."

It is right, that is to say, when it fits the narrative that it opens. There are the more than fifty-seven varieties of opening from which to choose—and ten times as many more if the writer have ability to strike them out. How to begin the particular story that the writer has to tell is not for precept to prescribe, but for the writer himself to perceive. The precept is merely an aid to him in learning to perceive—if you understand what we mean.

Given the values of A, B, and X

A was the noun,
Name of the thing;
When you said "A"
The idea went *ping!*

B was the verb,
Active and strong;
When you said "B"
The thought then went **dong!**

X was the adjective,
Noted for mush;
When you said "X"
The sentence went squsH!

Dual personality in writing

The only persons who, having had the necessary contact with a subject, cannot with at least some success think concerning it are obviously the mentally inable.

But it is different with detachment in writing. A man may know his history or science or economics or literary or technical specialty from A to Izzard, and yet not have developed the detachment which will enable him as he writes about his subject to see when and wherein he is and when and wherein he is not expressing his meanings clearly and well.

We have all had the experience of failing to "get" the point of a joke. Except that it is but momentary such failure of perception is akin to the failure of perception in the writer who does not realize when he is employing code-like or shorthandish expressions, nor why such expressions will puzzle the reader.

There is no pose about this. The writer really does not see; and the reason why he does not see is, that he has not developed the ability to detach himself from his own thinking and writing so that he can consider and judge them objectively.

Every John Smith who writes should be two John Smiths. The subjective John Smith conceives the idea and provides both the substance of the thought and the enthusiasm and energy of the expression. But the objective John Smith, analytical, critical, and practical, lays the plan, supervises its carrying out, directs the work, orders needed corrections and changes, inspects the product, and withholds his O. K. until the job satisfactorily meets standards.

Many a good writing-idea has collapsed sadly because John Smith 1st did not call in John Smith 2d to collaborate with him in working it out.

Words are such little things

"In a plainly furnished room. . . a woman in widow's garments busily plied her needle and thread. Although for days she had worked on the folds that lay across her lap, her eyes lighted with pleasure as she viewed her accomplished task. Rising, she gently waved the article back and forth. It was—"

Yes, yes! Gently waved the article.

It was—

You guess!

No sir! Whatever put that in your head! It wasn't anything personal or intimate at all! The idea! Why, it wasn't even a tablecloth she had been embroidering.

"Rising, she gently waved the article back and forth.

"It was the first American Flag."

As we were saying, words are such little things.

"Adapted to our needs"

The quality of humor, if he have it, helps the writing aspirant through his hours of disappointment and depression. At least it was doubtless so with the one who exclaimed, "Rejection-slips hadn't been invented when that gag about women's being the most puzzling thing on earth got started!" (But one thing we can be more sure about with a rejection-slip than with a woman; its no means no.)

One of the expressions the meaning of which in letters and slips of rejection really seems obscure to the inexperienced, is "adapted to our purposes."

It is true that the reason why a piece of copy is not adapted to the purposes of the publication refusing it may be, that it is too poor to print. But this is not by any means always the reason, as letters declining manuscripts not infrequently make clear: "This is well handled, and we regret that it is not adapted to our magazine."

In many instances "not adapted to our needs" means just what it says—in effect, that the would-be seller has offered the buyer—who is a "middleman," since he must in turn sell to others what he buys—a piece of merchandise that is not in the buyer's "line."

A salesman calls on a retail merchant. "I'm not interested," the dealer says. "I sort of specialize. I've been in business here five years, and I've built up a good trade strictly by catering in a few lines. I don't try to handle everything. The people who want something in the lines I offer come to me for it. They know that in those lines they'll find the best choice here. I've got it figured out by this time. You might say I've trained my trade to come to me for certain kinds of things, and to go to the other fellow for what I don't concentrate on. I've got a good business and that's the policy I've built it on. The trouble with your goods is they're outside my lines, that's all."

Plain enough. He knows the kinds of merchandise adapted to his policy. Ours are'nt any of those kinds. He tells us so. That settles it.

Imitation is the sincerest form of ——?

Sometimes the novice in writing falls under the influence of and emulates—or tries to—a sensationalist of one or another of the many kinds of sensationalist there are, affecting his attitudes and his excesses of manner and adopting without discrimination his half-sound ideas and his wholly unsound blather; and sometimes the novice is caught by specious doctrine or idea less spectacularly propagated.

That way lies probable misfortune. Imitation does not make for originality, nor usually does the imitator meet the success of the imitated. No circus likes to show where another circus has been showing. Neither does the acceptance unexamined of assertion, "ism," cult, idea, or doctrine make for intellectual self-dependence or independence, nor lead to a reputation for clarity, soundness, and dependability of thought and judgment.

Under the guidance of reason, to believe only that which is believable according to "the best that has been known and thought in the world"—this is the one safe standard.

While the junebugs zoom

♣ ♣ Pete Peters says, "Things 'ud be a lot less complicated if somebody wa'n't always discoverin' some wonderful new idee thet ain't got mor'n two bits' wuth to the dollar o' truth in it ♣ "Figure thet writin' stories is like drivin' the caows home. They ain't no harm in their doin' a bit o' grazin' as they go along providin' you don't let 'em leave the trail an' keep 'em movin'."

♣ ♣ Not five per cent of all the news sent out by the Associated Press is "crime news," the general editor of the A. P. told the public the other night in a radio talk. ♣ Couple with that the reflection that the A. P. deals with the news of the world, not merely with the news of the United States.

♣ ♣ Ten little sentences all stretching out in state; the cub used compression, then there were eight. ♣ Eight little sentences the deskman had to fix; his pencil slashed a moment, then there were six. ♣ Six little sentences, but the lino man was sore; he didn't follow copy, then there were four. ♣ Four little sentences. Now what could Make-up do? He overlooked a bunch of slugs, then there were two. ♣ Two little sentences when the making-up was done. But they spied 'em in the form proof, and then there was none.

♣ ♣ Timely tip for the songwriters: an entirely new and original song, with plenty of hokum; call it "Junelight and Roses."

The Best Things from PRINTLAND

"Green Apple" Literature

Our picture galleries are lined with brick-red nudes, swollen of limb and shrunken of head. Before these phenomena, plentiful crowds stop, look and listen, while learned gentlemen explain why discord is sweeter than concord.

In my own profession, that of story writing, there have been violent changes, too, and many of them. It looks as though an army of scribes had entered the Palace of Truth through the back door, taken a deep whiff of the rarefied atmosphere, and gone stark, staring mad.

I have on my desk a new novel whose cover design suggests its contents; the artist has drawn something which resembles an iceberg exploding into a very crooked rainbow. This novel hasn't any plot—plots have gone out of style—but in a rambling way, with occasional spots of brilliant writing, it deals with the monkey-shines of psychopathic people, quite beyond the understanding of sane minds.

The style is as strange as the subject-matter. Nouns are manufactured out of verbs, verbs out of nouns. Some sentences have no subject, others no predicate; few have both. Speeches are without quotation marks and commas are rare.

Now in the above I have mentioned extreme examples of some who have emerged from our newly-elected Palace of Truth. I, as a writer, lean more to the new movement than to the old stagnation.

With all its shocking faults, I rather think I prefer the Palace of Truth to the House of Lies wherein we used to sit, telling one another pretty fibs in order that life would seem to be one grand, sweet song, where virtue triumphs, and two loving hearts are invariably united at the end of the story.

Our present-day literature, at is best, has taken a stand against fraudulent, hypocritical thinking. Here in America, this has been our greatest advance. We have outgrown the nursery-tale type of fiction.

Outside of "Scaramouche" and a few others—which have unusual merit as pieces of romantic fiction

—our book-reading public has shown little interest in the dream-land stuff of sword-play, impossible heroes, and improbable heroines.

Stories of sober every-day life, doing justice to human frailty, not requiring a ridiculous nobility of our heroes, or an unearthly priggishness of our heroines, have made their way among us and succeeded, despite the cry of the professional optimist, "Why can't you write about something pleasant?" Just as if Charles Dickens, whom optimists adore, had never created Bill Sikes and a dozen more as ugly as he.

I still hold to my point, that American fiction has gained enormously, both in art and in usefulness, during the last 20 years. Freud and Jung, having reconstructed psychology, are beginning to be understood by a few.

Our novelists are learning to appreciate the queer curves and angles inside the human mind and to trace back the impulses which govern our otherwise unaccountable actions.

The serious novelist goes into the field with a certain scientific equipment; if he is an artist, his science is concealed under the engrossing pattern of his story.

Novelists might be classified into two pigeon-holes, labeled Good Showman and Good Teacher. Anyone who writes knows instinctively that showman and teacher must be combined in fiction. Otherwise text-books would be all-sufficing.

There is more of the teacher in our new realists than there was in our old romanticists; and in response to a certain hunger for fantastic color, a special and sinister class has arisen, literary sword-swallowers, mountebanks, sellers of intellectual cocaine. In contemplation of this latter, alarming class, I sometimes wonder if it were not better that the Palace of Truth had never been opened.

Theodore Roosevelt often mentioned something he called "the lunatic fringe." This described a mischievous class of people gibbering their fantasias, exploiting their footless doctrines, sometimes with a sort of insane brilliancy.

There is no doubt that many of our present-day authors are gamboling on that fringe, and we are receiving them with praise on the Moslem principle that a madman must be holy, because only Allah could make one so extraordinarily queer.

An ugly literature, dealing with subjects once confined to medical books, leaps out at us from every stationer's window. Some of us, who have no sense of humor, call the police and create a new martyr for the worship of the Young Intellectuals. Others of us labor with Little Groups of Serious Thinkers, only to be put in our place—which is, I belive, among mossy fuddy-duds who still believe in Santa Claus.

Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith, an English writer, once gave us a novel whose title held in it something of prophecy for America. It was called "Green Apple Harvest," and the phrase suggests fruit falling to rot long before the season

of ripening. Little, dwarfish apples, grown old before their time.

Superficially, at least, America in the last decade has taken a decided turn to the left. The lid is off and the air is reeking. Virtue seems to be as out of date as last year's airplane. Crime has taken upon itself the airs of cultivated society.

Is America gathering her green apple harvest, rotting in the days of her youth, so soon after Lincoln's simple, homely genius?

It is hard to believe so, and, for one, I am far from converted to that pessimistic view. Worms at the core make little apples fall; good farmers know the cure. If the tree is young and sound, the crop will ripen next year.

The main thing is this: We mustn't believe in rotten green apples. Bright-eyed lunatics dressed in motely and leaping from bough to bough, may argue delightfully to the effect that unripe fruit, being acceptable to pigs, must have a stimulating effect on the human stomach.

Nations have psychoses just as individuals have psychoses. A whole country will have hallucinations, act queerly for a while, then settle back to a normal, healthy existence. In the seventeenth century, practically all America believed in witchcraft. Silly, criminal scenes were enacted in New England. Then, suddenly, the evil spell evaporated, witches were no more.

Today we may be going through some such psychosis, but the indications show that the attack is mild. Occasionally a foreign genius will come to us with a book that oozes sickening perfume. He becomes a "best seller" and kills himself in the poison of his own popularity. Most of the neurotic books have a small circulation and remain in the hands of the queer minority.

This latter sign is good. The worst we can say is that a part of the fruit-crop has been spoiled. Many wholesome apples hang on the bough, and the young tree is untouched.—WALLACE IRWIN in *Springfield Union and Republican.*

Military Derivations

In recounting the history of the Government and the army, the following facts were brought to light. Since 1775 this country has been engaged in one hundred wars. Since September 12, 1789, when Henry Knox of Massachusetts assumed the office of Secretary of War, there have been fifty-three such officials and twenty-one assistant secretaries.

On two occasions the army was commanded by a captain and a lieutenant colonel, respectively. Captain John Doughty, artillery, commanded from June 20, 1784, to August 12, 1784, and Lieutenant Colonel Josiah Harmar, infantry, was in command from August 12, 1784, to March 4, 1791. In those days the army consisted of only a handful of men. A few years after the institution of the Federal Government, the Chevalier de Pontgibaud, who had served throughout

the Revolution as an aide to the Marquis de Lafayette, revisited the United States, and on his return made this comment: "I had occasion to call upon Mr. McHenry, the Secretary of War. There was no sentinel at the door; all the rooms, the walls of which were covered with maps, were open, and in the midst of the solitude, I found two clerks, each sitting at his own table, engaged in writing. At last I met a servant or rather the servant, for there was but one in the house, and asked for the secretary. He replied that his master was absent for the moment, having gone to the barber to be shaved. I was as much surprised to find all the business of the War Department transacted by two clerks, as I was to hear that the Secretary had gone to the barber's."

Since that day our country has stretched its boundaries from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Many changes have taken place. Two new departments have been created to assume some of the former duties of the War Department. In 1798 the naval affairs passed into the hands of the new Navy Department, and in 1849 the Department of the Interior was created, which now has control of the Indian affairs. Today if the Chevalier de Pontgibaud were to visit the offices of the War Department he would find little to recall his former visit.

In the days before the high powered rifle, that is, in all of our wars before the Spanish-American War, the soldiers wore blue uniforms with gold buttons. The type of uniform varied from the cut-away coat with white or red facings, white "smallclothes" breeches and leggins, the picturesque uniform of the old Continentals, to the much more simple close fitting blue blouse and blue trousers of the Indian fighters. In the old days of the short range musket the color of the uniforms made no difference, for a soldier was visible long before he was within range. "Don't fire until you can see the whites of their eyes" was the order at Bunker Hill. When Pickett charged at Gettysburg, scarcely a musket was fired until the two lines were no farther apart than is the deep outfield from the homeplate on the baseball diamond.

In the olden days of the army, the captains and lieutenants were differently uniformed from the enlisted men. The colonels and majors wore a more elaborate coat and trimmings than that of the junior officers, and the generals were still more showily clad. The officers' insignia of rank in our army differs from the insignia in use in other countries, and have been of gradual and interesting development. In 1780 the major generals were ordered to wear an epaulette on each shoulder with two stars and the brigadier wore one star on each epaulette. In 1832 the colonel's eagle appeared. The infantry wore silver epaulettes, all other arms of the service wore gold and the eagles were of the opposite metal. A few years

later the silver oak leaf of the lieutenant colonel appeared, and two bars for the captain and one bar for the lieutenant.

When, for the sake of uniformity, the epaulettes of all branches of the service were made of gold, the smaller shoulder straps without fringe was devised for field service and the uniform simplified.

Why does a lieutenant general rank a major general, and what is a regiment, is not an unusual question. To answer one must go back a thousand years. The company is commanded by a captain and his title is derived from the Latin word for head, "caput." His second in command is his lieu-tenant, the man who held (tenant) the command in place (lieu) of the superior officer. The third in command was the sergeant, one who served (servir). When several companies were put together they formed a column and the column was commanded by a colonel (column). The whole body, many columns, was commanded by a colonel general. Eventually the colonel was dropped and he became a general. His second in command was a lieutenant general, and then again the company sequence was drawn upon and the third officer was the major general. When a fourth general officer was needed, the name of the unit larger than the regiment, the brigade, was taken and he became a brigadier general.

The company is the group of men who live together. They eat bread, (pain) together (con). The regiment is the unit under the "regime" of an officer, now under a colonel. The brigade is a troop or crew or many together. A corps is a body (of men) and a division was originally a part of an army. The collar marks and colors of the service form an interesting list and are the means of telling at a glance to what branch of the army the bearer belongs. The devices are simply picture writing. The infantryman is armed with a musket and on his collar there is a pair of crossed rifles. The engineer builds forts, so he wears a castle. The medical man is represented the world over by the staff and serpent of Aesculapius.

When the blue uniform was worn the corps colors formed the background of the shoulder straps, the stripes of the trousers, the linings of the capes and the trimming for the full dress uniforms. Now they make the characteristic hat cords and base color of the guidon for each arm of the service. The oldest of these is the artillery red and the latest is the color of the chemical warfare service.—*Army and Navy Magazine.*

A Quiet View of Plagiarism

A smooth word on the subject of "plagiarism" is written by Edna Worthley Underwood, linguist and writer, whose urbane temper permits her to contemplate calmly two authors using identical words to clothe identical thoughts, as noted in the New York Times.

It was Channing Pollock who moved her to give her interesting evidence. He said that it is dangerous to read plays by unknown writers. They will probably accuse you of stealing their ideas when your next succcess is produced. Paying a pretty compliment to Mr. Pollock's "genius—and likewise his honesty"—she points out that even he, "wholly innocent as we know", might be caught in a situation which he could not explain. There is, for example, the mining incident in his play "The Fool", which, she says, is "almost exactly the same" as the mining incident in Zola's "Germinal."

Mrs. Underwood gives a number of examples from her wide reading among the literatures of ancient and modern peoples to indicate that the intention of borrowing is often absent in parallel pieces of writing. In a lyric by Andrew Lang, "The Moon's Minion", she finds that all the meaning and much of the phrasing duplicate exactly some lines of Baudelaire. She found Poe's "Raven" in Chinese, written centuries before Poe was born and never translated until after his death.

One need not be conversant with all the languages of modern Europe to realize that a completely original thought is hard to find, and new-minted words for it still scarcer. Much reading among the great of ancient times fills the mind with thoughts one might well wish he had first voiced. If he utters such thoughts, which he has made his own, in words and with images that suit the present time, he is hardly to be accused of plagiarism. Swinburne knew, loved and remembered Aristophanes — some have thought, too well. Byron denied any indebtedness to Goethe, but said that he and the German poet had both borrowed from the Book of Job. Lately we have had criticism of similarity in some lines of Theodore Dreiser and Sherwood Anderson. No reply has come from either of them, but they may some day discover and confess the source of both pieces.

To Make Advertisements Speak

Such excellent advice is given to those who wish to compose selling copy in an advertisement of Lord and Thomas and Logan, advertising counsellors of New York that we reprint it entire from the pages of Printers' Ink:

Tell them what they want to know, not what you want to say. That's basic in writing winning copy.

Every man who writes successfully, writes what the public likes to hear. If he didn't, the public would not read what he wrote.

That applies to newspaper writers, playwrights, essayists, feature writers, and, ABOVE ALL, to copy writers.

If you write to sway the millions, do it the way they like to have it done. Not the way you would like to do it.

If you have pet ideas, pet phrases, pet words, pet constructions,

keep them for some other use. The object of an advertisement is to sell goods.

And selling goods, in a competitive world, with a lot of smart men against you trying to do the same thing, is far more complicated than it seems.

The individual writer's chance to make good against that competition is to GIVE INTERESTING INFORMATION, concisely put, simply worded and dramatically presented to his audience.

So—don't follow by-paths. Don't try to "trick" people into reading your ad. That won't work. You must SELL them into a hearing.

Tell them in the headline what it is all about. If your subject is a beauty preparation, make your headline deal with beauty. If it is an automobile, make it deal with motoring. Don't stray a hundred miles off your subject to gain "Human Interest."

That is folly. The greatest human interest, for instance, you can find for a woman in a beauty preparation is a beautiful skin for her. The greatest for a man with enough saved up for the first payment on an automobile, is an automobile for him.

Come out in the open with what you have to offer. That gains always the greatest reading.

Remember that while you may trick a man into reading a beauty ad, you can't SELL him. And selling is what counts. In thus gaining one unprofitable reader, you may be losing ten thousand buyers.

Then in your text, jump into your subject. Figure you have maybe 10 seconds, maybe 30, to get the money. And every second you lose on wasted words retards some dealer's cash register from ringing, maybe, for months.

Don't urge, but allure. Don't say "I," but "You." Give your readers a chance to sell themselves, by making them WANT what you have to offer.

Those are a few of the common-sense rules in writing to the millions. Rules, because they are common-sense rules, that make the printed word pay.—From an advertisement of LORD & THOMAS AND LOGAN, in *Printers' Ink.*

Rejection Slip Also Rejected

A time honored institution of the writing craft, the rejection slip, is in danger of extinction. Hard worked editors want to abolish it. Have you ever seen a rejection slip? It runs like this:

The editor regrets that he is unable to use the manuscript you so kindly submitted, and it is returned herewith. This does not mean that it is without merit, but that on account of the great number of manuscripts received it is impossible to print all.

This slip is sent to thousands upon thousands of budding Americans annually. Some of them thereupon grit their teeth, burn the midnight oil and come through. Others get sour on the literary life and become bond salesmen or doormen at night clubs.

Not long ago Loren Palmer, editor of the Delineator, and Henry Sell, his superior officer in the Butterick shop, decided that the rejection slip was a dishonest and cringing subterfuge. The time had come to debunk it. So the Delineator announced that henceforward it would examine no unsolicited manuscripts, but depend upon official channels—that is, literary agents and its own selected authors—for its articles and stories.

Immediately there was a great to-do in the rooms of the Author's League. Authors saw the Delineator shutting its doors to the young men who have not yet won their spurs. It saw promising material rejected without being read. Great authors protested.

Messrs. Palmer and Sell pointed out that, after all, the debunking was not so radical a step. Most magazine editors know where they can put their hands on what they want. And every magazine spends thousands of dollars annually merely reading manuscripts for the glimmer of an idea.

At this point Charles Hanson Towne, now editor of Harper's Bazar, the magazine which gained its fine ascendency during Sell's administration, rose to seize the word, as the French say. Towne said that so far as he was concerned the gates were wide open. He would read everything in the hope of finding the unknown, and he had already printed stories and poems by unknown writers. But hearken to Henry Sell:

"If in these specialized times selective machinery has been set up in the offices of reliable and honest agents, through staff scouts and assistants, is the editor bound to give endless hours of his personal time reading the work of writers who do not consider it worth their while to avail themselves of modern conveniences? Must he continue to read endlessly through winnowed chaff when winnowed wheat is offered him daily from reliable sources? Do all rights go to the authors?"

It is, of course, the inalienable right of every native American to vote, ride in the subway for a nickel, and write stories or poems. Most of us hope some day to write a book, and some of us have done so without getting any great relief.

As an author, I remember that at the age of nine I wrote a story well fitted to the needs of the Youth's Companion. I followed it up with an anonymous letter in which I told the editor that the story was the work of a rising young genius and that if he did not accept it he would regret it.

He didn't, and no doubt does.

He inclosed a printed rejection slip, substantially containing the message printed above. The bicycle craze came along just then and I had no opportunity to visit Boston and confer with him about his curt note.

* * *

So far as I can recall, my feeling at that time was that rejection slips were an abomination and

should be abolished. I also felt that editors bought only from Kipling and Frances Hodgson Burnett and rejected newcomers.

Since then, however, I have had some experience as an editor. I have had to give up reading manuscripts for friends because it increased my irascibility at the dinner table. I have had a glimpse of the fact that every sophomore in college—and there are, at present, about one hundred thousand of these white hopes—regards the editor of the S. E. P., the Cosmo, the Red Book and the American Mercury as legitimate prey and expects to descend on him, wear out his Oriental rug and his patience, use up his time and his stamps and then spread broadcast the fact that he doesn't know his business and should be removed.

There is only one thing to do, and Henry Sell has indicated the way. Slam the door hard on these creatures and put out a sign saying: "Why not run a taxicab and try your vocabulary on the crossing cops?"

Alas, it has its drawbacks. For out there in that crowd of inkslingers may be one diffident, shrinking little youngster, a pale slip of a girl, with no friends, no mentors, but with the divine fire burning within her, and just after you have slammed the door you are smitten by the thought of that momentary glimpse of her face, and her eyes . . . and the zigzag curves on your circulation chart.

But don't worry about her. She'll break through. She always has. It's the robust ones who throw up the sponge and start a restaurant or a laundry. You can't stop authors that are determined to be authors. It's the one incurable disease for which there is no such thing as a rejection slip.—San Diego (Cal.) *Independent.*

"Composition as Explanation."

Professors of English and English Literature have an irritating habit of recommending young aspirants to study the classics, English and American, to follow the best models, and all that. There are many models, many classics; and some classics are not models for living usage. Hitherto the "problem" has not been "attacked" in the right way. It is solved in the Dial by Gertrude Stein, one of the most painstaking, original and creative of contemporary authors. She recounts her own experience. She erects a philosophical theory which, to those capable of the keen perception and reflection necessary to follow it, is irrefutable.

In her first days of authorship she created "a prolonged present." Then, in "The Making of Americans," she created a continuous present:

A continuous present is a continuous present. I made almost a thousand pages of a continuous present. Continuous present is one thing and beginning again and again is another thing. These are both things. And then there is using everything. This brings us again to composition this the using

everything. The using everything brings us to composition and to this composition. A continuous present and using everything and beginning again. In these two books there was elaboration of the complexities of using everything and of a continuous present and the beginning again and again.

Miss Stein might have added that not merely the consummate ordered whole of a great book, but the prosperity of every sentence in it, may be assured by this method. To take a familiar example, Cobett's "Hannah More is a Bishop in petticoats" is an illuminating continuous present. It is most unjust to Miss Stein to pluck out a few meshes of her close-knit and logical exposition. Our only apology is the wish to direct such of our readers as are interested in the necessaries of composition to an article that will answer all their doubts and difficulties in regard to a subject usually the more darkened the more it is explained. One golden remark about the temporal element we must ask leave to reprint:

The time in the composition is a thing that is very troublesome. If the time in the composition is very troublesome it is because there must even if there is no time at all in the composition there must be time in the composition which is in its quality of distribution and equilibration. In the beginning there was the time in the composition that naturally was in the composition but time in the composition comes now and this is what is now troubling every one the time in the composition is now a part of distribution and equilibration.

In the beginning there was confusion there was a continuous present and later there was romanticism which was not a confusion but an extrication and now there is either succeeding or failing there must be distribution and equilibration there must be time that is distributed and equilibrated. This is a thing that is at present the most troubling and if there is the time that is at present the most troublesome the time sense that is at present the most troubling is the thing that makes the present the most troubling.

Write that on your heart, and not a wave of composition-trouble will roll over your peaceful breast.—*New York Times.*

"Neither Rhyme Nor Reason"

This phrase has a very interesting historic origin.

A pompous and pedantic author took his ponderous book to Sir Thomas More, author of "Utopia," and asked his opinion of it. The Chancellor of "Bluff King Hal" is one of the most attractive characters in our history, so gentle and sweet-tempered was he, and he let this pedantic upstart down gently by suggesting to him that he might with advantage turn his book into rhyme.

It is related that the author went away highly pleased, and, on completing his task, returned to Sir Thomas for a final verdict. "Aye, aye," said the witty satirist, "that's better. 'Tis rhyme at least now, and before it was neither rhyme nor reason."—*Montreal Star.*

Partial Post

An Easy-Going Department for the Brief, Frank and Kindly Exchange of Constructive Comment

THE PUBLIC IS DAMNED

Dear Mr. Editor: Can you blame the author who is not an endowed institution if he pushes out one cheek with his tongue when he takes his pen in hand to write for the dear Public? The truth of the matter is that the Public is a fool, and then some. One of its favorite indoor sports is not reading, and when it does read, what does it read when it reads what it reads? — to parody a popular song. The surest—but not the best—index is the "wanted" list in our public libraries, and that is enough to make the elect mourn. Even our librarians are not fit to guide either young or old. Here, for example, are some genuinely new titles taken from a library that shall be (and ought to be) nameless:

"Millon the Floss," by G. Eliot.

"The Marble Farm," by Hawthorn.

"The Old Wive's Talk," by A. Bennet.

"Our Sketch Dook," by Washington Irving."

"The Passionate Flopment," by C. Mackenzie.

No sir, no self-respecting author can respect the Public, if he respects the demands of his own stomach.

A. TARTAR.

Well, well, well! Perhaps. And yet? At any rate, Miss or Mr. Tartar—or Mrs.?—is a part of the Public, just as the authors and editors all are. One must admit that readers are not as wise and discriminating as they might be, but there is no such identifiable person as "the average reader." What we actually have is a great many *classes* of readers, and those who estimate the entire mass by the character of news stand offerings make a serious mistake, because there are literally thousands of serious and worth-while periodicals published for special classes of readers, and these publications never see the magazine counters. What is more, many a flashy cover misrepresents the contents of its magazine, because not all is trash that's advertised in screaming colors. However, there are two sides of the subject, and A. Tartar's side is not ours.

IT IS A DELIGHT TO BLUSH

Editor, The Writer's Monthly,

Recently I purchased my second copy of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY. The first article I read in it was, "The Editor Has A Notion," and since reading it I am of a decided mind to keep purchasing the magazine until that Editorial tongue is again thrust out.

In that article you have pointed out more errors (and not only pointed them out, but done that which is far more vital to the earnest amateur, designated the correct methods) than one would find in two or three books on the general subject of authorship.

I see that you indict ignorance, almost at the outset. Yet, as you so exactly guessed it, the writer would do better if he knew how. To find the proper weapon to slay this arch-criminal Ignorance is a hard problem for the beginner, and many literary crimes are committed as a result.

My first difficulty lay in the fact that I had small notion how to prepare a MS. so that it would be worthy of editorial consideration. I felt that I had something of interest to say, but knew not how to prepare the material dressings to please a manuscript reader. What paper to use; what sort of folio to send in; how to enclose postage for the return of rejected matter; what type of MS. should be first offered by letter; which could be sent simultaneously with a letter of explanation; which needed no personal communication whatsoever from the writer—of all these things I was in ignorance and, worst of all, knew not where to seek information, for all the sources I had access to disappointed me.

For example, when at last I had my first MS. ready to mail I began to wonder if the purchaser was entitled to all rights. A book on copyrights failed to enlighten me specifically.

The public night school system in my city has become a splendid institution, but that again was too general; there is too little time for individual problems while caring for the progress of the whole.

Several would-be writers of my acquaintance took up certain correspondence school courses, and gave both time and money to their endeavor to slay the Criminal, and failed on the same old plane of generality. One young woman forwarded three MSS. to a firm in ————————for criticisms, and when the criticisms were returned she had difficulty in appending them to the proper MSS.; so stereotyped was their form that they were totally without point or constructive value.

At last I, who had been for a long time a reader of the literary page in The Los Angeles Times, wrote to Lillian and Thomas Ford, who edit that page, for some specific information or for suggestions as to where it could be procured. Their answer came with a promptness and kindness which I like to remember.

Each question I had asked was answered in a comprehensive way that left no room for speculation, and it was at their suggestion that I purchased that first copy of THE WRITER'S MONTHLY. And through its pages I am gradually apprehending and executing some of the little Errors that so capably aid and abet the Chief Criminal. Also I hope that in time it will develop a glimmer of vision in my "blind eye."

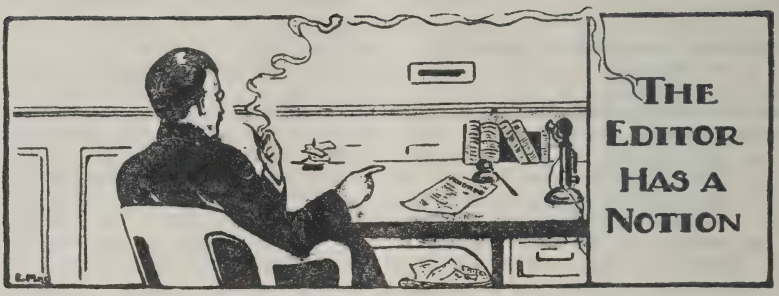
I wish to thank you especially for the clarity and pertinence of your remarks concerning the typing of manuscripts, and in general for the aggregate of pointed instruction which I have received from two copies, one not yet entirely read, of The WRITER'S MONTHLY.

Measure the amount of my gratitude and honest appreciation, for your article and the magazine itself, by the completeness of my failure to secure such help from other sources.

Sincerely yours,
JENNIE CATHERN CRUM

Now that is a thoroughly convincing document, because it makes the "Editorial wee" feel very much bigger. We almost never print in the MONTHLY words of praise for our magazine, but when we read this letter we began to think of asking for a "raise". It is to be hoped that the Publisher reads this month's issue and finds out what—but our too-kind correspondent has already said it.

I believe that the idea that the student should not be required to do much of anything he doesn't like to do is all wrong. It puts emphasis on the wrong place—on the student's likes and dislikes instead of on the job.—H. M. ROWE.



Due perhaps to the recurring question of censorship and the suppression of certain plays, books and magazines, the Editor has been hearing much recently about the matter of the author's obligation to tell the truth as he sees it, irrespective of public opinion.

The subject is fascinating—partly because it leads to such radically, and often violently, divergent opinions. Clash is the mother of interest.

One man holds literally that it is not only the author's right but his emphatic duty to paint life as it is (which to him means, as he sees it), glossing nothing, extenuating nothing, concealing nothing, but always calling things by their simple names, openly, unashamedly. The other maintains that some functions of life, though entirely respectable, are not to be exposed to the public view. Therefore he champions the cause of reticence and of dignified privacy for that which is, in his opinion, essentially private in character.

Between these two extremes there are actually several middle paths—one tending in one direction, another in another, and a third steering an even course in the middle. It is all very interesting—and very important.

The editor has no intention of debating the question in general, but he does venture the remark that it will not do to regard authorship exclusively from a single viewpoint. The rights and the obligations of the individual cannot be held to be of greater validity than the wishes of the many—even when the individual is right and the many wrong, as is sometimes the case. For the time being, at least, the many must rule, and both their wishes and their rights are to be regarded. So the Editor has a notion that when a writer insists on undressing in the market place, so to say, he should be censored, not by a Board but by a stout lath. And the best lath with which to "lambaste" him is for the public to ignore his bad taste. As a rule, the greater the furor the greater the publicity. The one thing a supreme egoist cannot stand is to be unobserved.

There is, however, a remedy for all overt offenses against the public sense of decency, and that remedy lies in the Common Law. But even that is not infallibly wise in its administration, for some judges are prejudiced, and some public prosecutors have long, furry ears. But in the main the citizens of a republic may rest pretty well content that if a writer can be convicted by a jury of twelve, of clearly teaching treason, sedition or moral turpitude through his published words, he deserves his punishment. It is a sound doctrine that my right to swing my fist ends where your nose begins.

The Common Law and Public Opinion are the only censorships that we can respect.

A cognate question raised nowadays is, How far is an author blameworthy for writing less than his best for the sake of making sales?

Every now and then someone arises to denounce as panderers and base commercialists, and other more or less reprehensible things, all writers who produce material meant merely to entertain. But are such excoriations just? The Editor finds himself asking himself a series of questions touching on this matter:

Can it be seriously maintained that recreation in its proper place and in reasonable amount is not as useful to man as instruction?

In "writing one's best", is there not a valid distinction to be made between best in kind and best in degree?

Is it any less honorable to write a recipe for polishing shoes than to indite a sonnet to milady's eyebrows?

Are there not sermons in jests as well as homilies in earnest?

Is it wrong to write—decently—for the masses that which the classes do not care to read?

Who made the self-styled intelligentsia—or the Watch-and-Ward censors—the judges of what a man should read or write?

The Editor has a notion that a great deal of piffle is being written on this subject. If he were not fully occupied with other matters, and had he not place for more than he has time to write, he would not hesitate for one moment to compose stories for the newspapers and the lesser magazines, labor-saving hints for household or mechanical departments, jokes for the funny magazines (that are so sadly in need of being funny), and light verse for any honest periodical that would pay for it. We should laugh at a stone mason who would refuse to help build a vaudeville theatre because it is not a cathedral, so why should we listen with awe to the self-righteous professions of the man or the woman who "would be ashamed to write for any but the best magazines"? The fact is that now and then the "best" magazines publish some stuff that is deplorable from every

viewpoint — subversive of American institutions, harmful to public morals, and not only weak artistically but in very bad taste. That these are mere occasional lapses from a high average of merit is not now forgotten, but it is beside the present point, which is that the one standard of what is worthy is not where it is published but what it is in itself.

Many a writer would gladly stop writing light and absolutely ephemeral stuff if he could presently find a market for higher-grade material. But in many cases he cannot, for one or more of several reasons: He may not have come as yet to mastery of his medium, and his practice-work must needs be light. He may have a prejudice against starving in a garret, when writing salable yet not unworthy stuff will pay for three square meals and a little house. He may be working harder to perfect himself as a writer, while pressing his way upward, than is his critic who snorts his disapproval of the "small" writer for "prostituting his genius"—which is oftener denounced than seen—and yet does not himself appear in the pages of the select few.

Writing is both a profession and a craft—not only in that it is governed by a self-erected and self-enforcable ethical code, the code of *noblesse oblige,* but in that it requires a longer or shorter apprenticeship, and demands of its membership a certain skill in handling materials. So long as craftsmanship is an element fundamental to literary artistry, so long will it be useless to condemn writers for writing what can be sold—if it does not offend their own good consciences. The Editor would rather write greeting cards for a living, and try to make that the stepping stone to genuine poetry, than to forego the valuable training gained by publication because the editors "of the big four" would not take his masterpieces.

To attain velocity, cut out verbosity.—ROE FULKERSON.

A play is a work of art to the degree that its dialogue and action recreate in the mind of the audience a suggestion of the image of human perfection.—SELECTED.

No matter how great artists develop in heart and mind, no matter what changes take place in them, some power of life and emotion gives their work and their lives through all their development a changeless line of consistency.—MARY COLUM.

Contributions to Experience Meeting are welcomed and payment is made in the form of subscriptions to the magazine. Contributions should not be more than 300 words, because of space limitations. Since unavailable manuscript cannot be returned, carbon copies should be kept.

Realizing that good health pays cash dividends, readers of The Writer's Monthly should be pleased to know that, beginning with the April issue, the Pacific Salesman, 102 Havens Bldg., Oakland, Calif., will give valuable health-books as prizes to writers contributing the best letters printed each month in their department, "For Your Health's Sake." Special topics may be outlined, so it would be well for writers to keep copies of the periodical on file.—B. W. C.

At one time I sold considerable material to Popular Mechanics, Chicago, but lately have sent them nothing. Recently I had a letter from L. K. Weber, managing editor, in which he wrote as follows:

"No one likes to lose a friend, you know, and so I am wondering why we have not heard from you recently.

"There must be countless new, interesting and useful things with which you are in daily contact and that would interest our readers, and our rates, I think, would be much more satisfactory to you than formerly.

"Remember that your ideas may be worth money and it is so easy to capitalize the interesting things you see. True, we can't use pictures of freaks of nature, advertising devices or queer accidents, because there are so many of them, but new time and labor saving kinks, photographs and circulars of the many clever devices now appearing in the stores may easily yield you a good profit with little effort. The magazine itself is the best guide to what we use.

"You do not have to be a skilled writer and, indeed, some of our best contributors never use a typewriter. Sometimes a brief description accompanied by a rough sketch from which our artists can make a drawing is enough. Photographs with human figures are always best, but often an advertising circular will meet our needs.

"We are always in the market for things that will interest our readers."

I am sending a vote of thanks to Harold F. Podhaski for his series, "There's Money in News Correspondence", which appeared in The Writer's Monthly last year. The series has enabled me to cut loose and make my living by free-lancing with the markets I had already built in addition to those I picked up as a result of that series.

Last fall I moved from my farm to a city of 100,000. Shortly after I arrived I sent letters to the news editors of ten of the trade papers I had read about in Mr. Podhaski's series. From these I got five assignments as local correspondent. Now I am corresponding for three dailies, four weeklies and several monthlies and bi-monthlies, all regular work because there's always news. Every few days now I am adding a new paper to my list until I have enough to occupy much of my time. Have had several orders for longer articles from my trade papers too.—R. E. D.

Several years spent in the service of a large corporation taught me the value of files. Accordingly, I have made it a practice to keep within easy reach all letters received from editors. Nor do I slight the rejection slips which give the requirements of the periodicals sending them out. The letters are carefully filed according to magazines and then by dates, the latest letters at the top of the file. The various files are then arranged alphabetically.

Reference to these letters often has a two-fold benefit. Primarily, I am able to see at a glance the relative values attached by certain editors to certain pieces of work. In that way, I have an excellent idea of just what will suit, what will mildly please, and what will barely "get by". In the second place, looking through several letters of commendation is often a source of considerable cheer and inspiration.

A recent letter from the editor of a publication using but little verse, is rather illuminating. It shows by what narrow margins our work sometimes is accepted. "The poem that happened to be used as a feature in a recent issue," he writes, ".....was taken, I presume, mostly because of the last line." Likewise, a poem submitted to the editors of the Fiction House was returned to me because of the last line. Mr. Martinsen, the associate editor, however, was kind enough to point out the defect.

A recent letter from E. A. Weishaar, editor of Illustrated Mechanics, Kansas City, announces a change in editorial policy. "We have decided," he writes, "to eliminate all long feature articles .....and devote our entire editorial space to small illustrated articles in which the picture tells the story. The nature of these articles is the odd and curious, recent household inventions, home-craft articles, helps and hints about the radio, auto, etc." This magazine gives prompt decisions and pays on publication from one-half to one cent a word.

In much the same field, evidently. is The Current Ideas Publishing Company, 612 North Michigan

Avenue, Chicago. A recent letter from these people requested articles regarding science, radio, or mechanics. Items about one or two hundred words in length are desired.—H. V. H.

The editor of MacLean's Magazine, Toronto, recently told me that he found it difficult to get light fiction for his summer numbers. "Canadians write such serious stuff," he smiled; and I am a Canadian.

He welcomes articles, chiefly of a practical nature, which show that Canada "is a good place to live (and prosper) in." The development of industry, or achievement along any line, from coast to coast, when dealt with by a native writer with ability and forcefulness, will find a place in his columns.

Contributions over 2000 words in length, so says the managing editor, are too long to submit to Willison's Monthly, Toronto. This publication takes literary articles, poetry, and occasionally a playlet. Its political articles are the work of special correspondents. A Canadian historical background in literary, poetic, or dramatic offerings is desirable.

The Canadian Home Journal, Toronto, likes a strong Canadian tone and setting in its short-stories, which are apt to be of a shorter length than those in MacLean's. It has a wide range of tastes to cater to, and does not confine itself wholly to stories of the "women's magazine" type.

The Western Home Monthly, Winnipeg, publishes a variety of lengths in short fiction, from the very short to the 7000-word length.

Onward, Toronto, is a splendid market for the short, well-written informative article, with accompanying illustrations. Points in natural history entertainingly explained, with apt descriptive bits; or the details of trade-processing, brightly told, are favored by the editors. The short-stories they accept are only such as will please the more discriminating of juvenile and adolescent readers—C. K. S.

The American Baptist Publication Society, 1701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, now has two "methods" magazines for Sunday-school workers, in place of the old Sunday-School Worker. They are called Young People's Leader and Children's Leader, dealing with Senior-Intermediate, and Junior-Primary-Cradle departments respectively. These are a vast improvement upon the old plan, incidentally offering the writer a much larger field for both methods and original work—B. P. P.

The Texas Freemason returns a manuscript saying, "We carry only Masonic articles, largely limited to Texas, and depend upon our own channels for material". It has changed its address to 1804½ Jackson St., Dallas, Texas.

Although it is a "pay on publication" magazine, the New England Homestead, Springfield, Mass., is very courteous in its treatment of authors. A note from Mrs. Mary

R. Reynolds, household editor, in accepting an article on caning chairs was very friendly and kind. Within three weeks of acceptance, the article was published.—M. S. S.

As service man for a printing concern I am paid to supply ideas that will procure orders for printing. In some cases coined words or trade names are needed, others need some idea that will set off their proposition from the regular run of competitive offerings.

A toy manufacturer is constantly calling on me as an "Idea Man" for ways of featuring his novelties. He seems well able to fashion new ideas in wood, but when it comes to advertising material he calls for the printer. Although this manufacturer has an advertising agency connection, he got from me a trade character-idea that was drawn up by a competent artist and is now being used in his national advertising. Compensation for this idea was a good-sized order for printing display cards that featured the invented character.

Rough ideas for illustration and layout of advertising pieces were purchased for $3 and $5 each by a photo-engraving concern that has a regular staff of artists and layout men.

Several coined words were used by the candy-promotion department of a sugar refinery. These were passed on to food manufacturers, together with candy formulaes, and resulted in large orders for sugar.

The maker of an automatic machine that had received a large volume of news-comment willingly paid for an idea on how to preserve and use this press comment. The idea involved a booklet, with special side notes and indexing, and resulted in a printing order in addition to the service, or idea, charge.

For useable direct-mail ideas a magazine offered five dollars, and I received one of these acceptable checks for the idea back of a collection letter which I had evolved some years previous. The letter had resulted in 98 per cent renewals of a club membership.

Probably the most exacting market for ideas is my five-year-old daughter, who brags that she has got the "craziest daddy that ever lived," and brings in the neighboring "kids" to find out for themselves. "Cash, or a substantial amount of commodities," is not the pay in this case, or for the ideas that are demanded for church, socials and children's parties. But I find that the more one has to dig for ideas the more ability comes for future suggestions.

Willingness to send out thought-bait in many different streams goes far towards making an Idea Man. So many people make a feeble attempt to think up something "brilliant," and give up quickly instead of trying and rejecting hundreds of ideas good and bad.

The writing of nonsense verse—not for publication—has been a great aid in gaining facility for supplying coined words and trade-mark names.—E. P. H.

New Stories by New Writers, 1120 Fifth Street, San Diego, Calif., has the art of rejecting manuscripts gracefully. A handwritten notation appears on the slip of paper, often commenting favorably on the story, giving reasons for its rejection and sometimes even suggesting a possible market. Such a mercifully-tempered rejection is almost balm to the would-be contributor.

The American Needlewoman, Augusta, Maine, is a pleasant magazine to deal with. In response to a letter of inquiry regarding second serial rights, they replied:

"We do purchase second serial rights, provided first serialization was in a magazine which would not be likely to cover much of the same field that we cover. If you would like to submit your manuscript for our consideration, we should like to look it over."

They reply promptly, too—which is a real consideration.—H. M. H.

The Chicago Tribune has long conducted a number of departments that offer from one to five dollars for accepted contributions, as has heretofore been noted in these columns. "Embarassing Moments" and "Bright Sayings of the Children" appear in the daily and Sunday issues. The departments that appear only on Sunday vary as the months go by. Last Sunday there appeared departments headed, "My Greatest Thrill", "Bright Sayings of Husbands and Wives", "Cheekiest Person I Ever Met", "Funniest Joke I Ever Heard", "Jealousy", "Strange Weddings", and "I Worry". Accepted contributions are printed within a month or six weeks and are paid for the following week.

I have found this to be a good market for a number of short articles that I could not have sold anywhere else—not due to quality, I hope, but to their nature. I have recalled almost forgotten situations, and created new incidents, which were paid for by the departments, and that later have furnished germs for plots or characters for stories.—R. G. M.

Fletcher's Farming, Hondo, Texas, a small but progressive farm monthly, uses short, concise articles on all farm subjects and longer ones of special interest topics, but pays only in subscription due-bills at the present time. However, the periodical promises to do better for its contributors as soon as possible. The editor says: "For a young man who can combine selling ability with an ambition to become an agricultural journalist, Farming has a chance to offer for a tryout of his ability." I have found my connection with Fletcher's Farming and other small papers interesting, encouraging and generally well worth the time and effort, by reason of the experience gained, even if the connection has been lacking financial consideration.—H. C. K.

Claude King, editor of Sports Afield, 542 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, wrote me this personal note:

"We are returning your really excellent poem, as the new management is printing very little poetry these days, and we do not feel it would be right to keep this poem too long on hand unpublished." Sports Afield usually pays in subscriptions.

Farm Journal, Washington Square, Philadelphia, returned a "Pruning Hook Extension" article and two pictures with the suggestion that a sketch of the idea would make it clearer. I returned the article and a rough sketch, and got back an "enclosed-find" for three dollars.

Popular Mechanics, 200 E. Ontario, Chicago, has taken a dozen or so short "How to Make" articles of mine, describing little conveniences for the home, office, farm, or shop, with a sketch or photograph. They pay from three to five dollars each for these and are very prompt with either check or rejection. I made a desk holder for my portable typewriter to keep the light machine from shifting about as I pounded out the "Great American Novel." The G. A. N. is still unsold, but Popular Mechanics paid a fiver for the holder idea.—H. R. H.

Although I am only a beginner in the writing game, I try to keep some material going out almost every day. When I do not have time for a long article or story, I send something to the short-article departments of different magazines and papers.

The Woman's World, Chicago, has such a department called "The Postman's Whistle," which uses jokes, recipes or short labor-saving devices. They pay fifty cents apiece for the articles accepted.

The Farmer's Wife, St. Paul, Minn., has a department called "A Fine Idea," and each idea submitted should tell of a new way of doing something in the home or garden that saves time, steps, labor or money. These should be stated in as few words as possible. One dollar is paid for each accepted article for this department.

This magazine also publishes letters from women every month, paying three dollars for each letter published and ten dollars for subjects that will be furnished on request.—B. R.

Popular Science Monthly, 250 Fourth Ave., New York, in outlining their needs in a recent letter, asks: "What new, useful mechanical devices are being manufactured in your local factories, or offered for sale in your local stores? What interesting scientific work is being carried on in your State University? What new 'kink' has your local garage man or your neighbor developed to make motoring more pleasurable? Are you, or one of your friends, or the manual training class in your local school, doing some piece of original handicraft the details of which might supply a 'how to make' article for our

Home Workshop? Are there any interesting or colorful personalities among your acquaintances; persons who make their livings in unusual ways, or are distinctive for some other reason?

"These are just a few typical Popular Science Monthly subjects —the sort of material we are always glad to consider and to pay for if available for use in the magazine.

"You know, of course, that in all cases we require illustrations; preferably clear photographic prints that contain human hands or human figures, although in 'how to make' articles and similar contributions we can use rough sketches that are capable of being adopted by our artists. We cannot use cuts nor electrotypes."

This is probably the widest open market for the amateur writer of short articles and paragraphic items, and the pay is good and prompt.

American Forests & Forest Life, Lenox Building, Washington, D.C., announces a welcome increase in their rates of payment to two cents a word. This is far better than the old rate of a little less than one cent, and should prove attractive to the writer of their kind of stuff. However, a careful perusal of several issues of the magazine is necessary to get a line on their needs.—F. M. W.

The benefit derived from my Introductory Course in Short-Story Writing has just revealed itself in a new and unexpected manner.

With me, writing is an avocation; my vocation has to do with submarine cables and their operation. Recently, some new and complicated apparatus was installed. Having "swotted" from the various blue-prints the devious manner of its working, I undertook to make new drawings, taking each part separately, to which I added a full descriptive text. No description had been supplied with the original drawings. When my diagrams were finished I had them blue-printed, made the whole up into a booklet and submitted it to the chief. To my surprise, after he had perused it, he informed me he had written to the Head of the Plant Department describing what I had done and suggesting that it would be an excellent plan to have the booklet printed and distributed throughout the system. That the instruction I had received in writing enabled me to put my descriptive matter clearly and concisely and went a long way towards putting the work over, I feel quite sure.

My Remington Portable needed a new ribbon. The price is $1.00. I purchased a full-size typewriter ribbon for $1.25, rolled half of it on to my Portable spools, which was about all they would take. The other half, still unused, will give me another new ribbon when this one goes west.—S. B.

The Word Page

A considerable number of Latin words may be traced back to a single root, just as is the case with certain English words. A good example is *lux* (light), with its varied forms—*lucis, lumen,* and others. We have from this original source "elucidate", to shed light upon; "lucid", clear; "illustrate", to enlighten by example; "luminary", anything giving light, "pellucid", transparently clear; "translucent", that which allows light to pass through it, and many others.

An "idiom" is a national or a racial way of expressing an idea, irrespective of the syntax. When a group of words has by long usage acquired a fixed meaning which the component words, taken separately and in their grammatical relation, do not actually express, we call that word-group an idiom, and do not attempt to parse it. For example, we have "at length", "fall out", "make a break", and many others.

In a looser sense, an idiom is a saying taken—almost always traceably — from some occupation, game, sport, animal habit, or what not, and used figuratively in common parlance. The tendency of all figurative idiomatic phrases is to appeal to the imagination. Hence a not-too-threadbare idiom adds freshness to the speech, and picturesqueness as well. "At bay", "on the scent", and "bring to heel" are obviously drawn from dogs and the chase; "lay an anchor to windward", "clear the decks", "to steer clear of", are of the sea (and it should be noted that nautical usage has yielded more idioms to our English than has any other source, unless it be dogs and the chase); "a flash in the pan", "go off half-cocked", "lock, stock and barrel", suggest the old flint-lock days; "rub his fur the wrong way", "hump up her back", "nine lives", "draw in your claws", all come from the cat.

A third type of idiom is the common pairing of words; as, "in fear and trembling", "by fits and starts", "dust and ashes", and the like. The origins of these are various, and not always clear.

And so hundreds of other idioms might be quoted, but these are enough to set the writer to examining his own language with a view to consistency, for nothing is more ridiculous than to use a figurative idiom in a strained connection. It is quite as bad to spoil one's style by overworking idiomatic phrases.

When the Writer Reads

The Pocket Oxford Dictionary

True, it would require a fairly capacious pocket to hold a book 7¼ x 4½, and 1½ inches thick, yet this is really a compact volume. It contains more than 1000 pages of small but very clear type, and its arrangement is such that the editors have been able to pack into it an amazing number of definitions.

The "Oxford" is a standard in England for constant use, for the huge "Murray's" is too large for any but scholars. The present volume, however, is not solely a British work, for George Van Santvoord, Professor of English in the University of Buffalo, and recently of Yale, has revised the English text, giving American spellings, pronunciations and meanings, besides adding many words not common in British usage. This work has been well done, in the main, though one must note that the pronunciations do not always conform to those sanctioned by the standard Amercian dictionaries; as, *across* (-aws) and *hallucination* (-loo-). An ingenius yet simple system of diacritical marks furnishes a clear guide to pronunciation, and enables the editor to include many words not found in other condensed dictionaries—about 20,000 in all. It is an admirable inexpensive work. Oxford University Press, New York.

Ask Me Another

Here is a novel idea. The subtitle is The Question Book. Justin Spafford and Lucien Esty have compiled forty information tests, comprising over 2000 questions that the average person ought to know, has probably at one time learned, but has forgotten.

Who, for example, was Charlemagne? Surely, after reading Mr. Well's Outline of History you ought to answer that. Literature and general culture go together: who, then, composed the famous Mass in B Minor? Or turn your globe around seven times and tell me this: where is Mt. Ararat?

In the back of the book the proper answers are given by which to check yourself up. The scores of prominent people are noted.

It may be predicted that the book will provide a popular pastime, and an agency for disseminating much information at the same time. The Viking Press, New York.

The Writer's Monthly

A Journal for All Who Write

Edited by
J. BERG ESENWEIN

Assistant Editors
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IMPORTANT NOTICES

Change of address must reach the publishers before the fifteenth of the month preceding issue, otherwise no number can be duplicated. Subscribers must give old addresses when sending in the new, specifically addressing the notice to The Writer's Monthly.

Return postage must accompany all regular articles intended for publication.

In no case can short items for the Departments be returned if unavailable.

Notice of accepted material will be sent promptly with payment on acceptance. However, items for "Experience Meeting" will be paid for only in shorter or longer subscriptions to *The Writer's Monthly,* to be sent to any desired person. Items of news will not be paid for.

Vol. XXIX **June** **No. 6**

As an editor prepares the manuscript for a given issue, he cannot divest himself of that critical though not censorious attitude which is typically a part of what may be called "the editional temperament." For this reason he will see in even the best of articles places where he could wish that the author had expanded or contracted; or where more temperate or more explicit, or stronger, language had been used, or where the citation of an example would have reinforced the writer's statements; and so on. Then, too, editors are likely to have pet aversions in the matter of words and phrases, and likewise their own verbal and stylistic favorites, so that constantly they must check their inclination to change things to suit their own taste, when actual errors have not been made.

The late John Wanamaker once whimsically told the manager of his advertising department, who wrote much of the "copy" for the Wanamaker stores' publicity, that he somehow felt that no piece of "copy" was quite right until he, Mr. Wanamaker, had touched it up with his blue pencil—even if later he restored the deleted or altered wording or make-up. Editors at length come to feel much the same way, and so must—as the wiser ones do—guard against any such obsession.

On the other hand, editors must not be too considerate of the feelings of their contributors when a change would work definite betterment or save the writer from criticism or even ridicule. Virtually every manuscript accepted for publication needs some alteration, be it never so minute, in order to make it conform to the style or policy of the periodical in which it is to appear. It may be, for example, that the journal affects certain spellings; in that case the preferences of the author cannot be considered—and the same is true of capitalization, hyphenization, word-compounding, the use of Italics, and other typograhphical devices. The custom of the magazine, when clearly justifiable, must be the sole criterion.

Just how far is an editor permitted to go in the alteration of a manuscript accepted for periodical publication? Absolutely there cannot be a satisfactory answer, for it is not satisfactory to say, as one actually must, that it all depends on the wisdom of the editor. Some principles, however, may safely be laid down, and in our view they are these:

1. No editor may properly make an alteration in, addition to or excision from a manuscript that clearly changes the purpose or meaning of the author, unless the change (a) is obviously in the interest of the public welfare, or (b) is necessary in order to make the article read sensibly, or (c) is demonstrably required to meet the exigencies of publication. When the need for drastic change appears the editor should, if at all possible, consult the author, and perhaps show him a proof of the revised article. However, sometimes it is not always possible to do either of these things, perhaps owing to a late discovery of a weakness in the article, or the necessity, as is often the case with timely material, of getting it quickly into print. Most authors realize that the printer is a great respecter of times and seasons.

2. No editor is justified in emasculating an article merely to make it fit a required space; nor in adding to it, for the same reason, when the addition does not perfectly harmonize with the tone and trend of the article.

3. No editor can defensibly alter the plot of a story, destroy its intended total effect, or add or delete anything that would clearly tend to detract from the author's reputation or standing as an individual or as a craftsman.

The converse of these three principles may readily be worked out by any writer or editor who is interested in thinking the matter through. Superior knowledge and experience will, in certain instances, enable the editor to improve a given manuscript in a way that will win the approval and even the gratitude of the author. In fact, most editors would be able to show countless letters from contributors expressing such gratification. But only an asbestos letter-filing cabinet prevents a conflagration in many a sanctum after the author has denounced the editor for changes—that may indeed have been quite unwarrantable. It all comes back to the original statement—everything depends on the wisdom of the changes.

But, to add a word of summation—there are two reasons why an editor buys a certain manuscript: for what it is, and for what it may be made. It is the author's function to do his best, and the editor's to better the work wherein it has fallen short. If he cannot better it without spoiling it—to perpetrate a conscious bull—he would better have rejected it in the first place.

The more complicated society becomes in its organization the less valid are simple judgments. Cross-purposes and extenuating circumstances constantly must be taken into account. Surface indications doubtless served very well as a basis for conclusions in the Stone Age, but they are not enough nowadays, if one is to render just verdicts.

The experienced fiction writer knows this, and is a student of mental and moral motivation and of physical and social causation. There is no more fascinating field of study than what makes the wheels go 'round in human beings.

The writer must train himself to read as a writer and not merely as a reader. The more thorough his training in craftsmanship the more completely will he comprehend the technique of any piece of writing, and profit by it.

H. C. S. Folks

Helen Diehl Olds, Little Neck, L. I., has had the following stories published recently: "The Ghost of Hermit's Hill", "The Mystery of the Missing Santa Claus", "The Blue Valentine", and "In Defense of Mugs", all in the Portal (Cincinnati); "Muff's Adventures" and "Muff and the Radio" in the January 9 issue of Sunday Afternoons. Mrs. Olds is the editor of The Little Neck Ledger, a weekly newspaper just started to circulate in Little Neck and Douglaston, L. I.

"Red," a poem by Edgar Daniel Kramer, Baltimore, Md., was printed in the first March number of Ace-High Magazine.

Helen Elmira Waite, New Milford, N. J., has had contributions in the following publications during the past year: Boys and Girls (Nashville, Tenn.), Sunshine (Lebanon, Pa.), American Childhood, Pilgrim Elementary Teacher (Boston), Queen's Gardens (Philadelphia), and Sunbeam (Philadelphia).

Lariat Story Magazine for April contained a story by Francis W. Hilton, Newcastle, Wyo., entitled "The Trigger Kid".

J. R. Johnston, Ann Arbor, Mich., is the author of "When Good Brands Get Together" in the December issue of Triple X (Robbinsdale, Minn.); "A Touch of Iron" in the February issue of Cowboy Stories, and "One Year After" in the April issue of the same magazine; and "The Luck of Sam Yeager" in the second April number of Ace-High.

Eugenia Bragg Smith, Montgomery, Ala., was the winner in the Short Story Contest conducted by the Alabama State Fair. The title of Mrs. Smith's winning story was "Wishes of the Dead".

Management (Chicago) for February carried an interview article by Dirk P. DeYoung, Avenel, N. J., under the title "Because She Speaks Their Language", concerning Alice Foote McDougall, President of Alice Foote McDougall & Sons, New York.

Ada Mae Hoffrek, Rutherford, N. J., is author of a poem, "What Does It Mean?" in the December 18 issue of The Way (Philadelphia); "Music and Beauty" in the December 11 issue of Leaves of Light (Shippensburg, Pa.); an article, "Music and the War" in a recent issue of Young People's Weekly (Elgin, Ill.); an article, "Church Music", in the January and February issues of The Home Magazine (Nashville, Tenn.); and two poems, "That Pal O' Yours" in the January issue and "Give Thanks" in the March issue of Square Deals (New Freedom, Pa.).

"Old-World Highways" by Catherine Beach Ely, New York, appeared in the March issue of American Motorist (Washington, D. C.).

Edna May Bush, New Florence, Pa., had an article, "It Pays to Advertise Misprints" in the February issue of The Writer's Digest (Cincinnati); a parody in the April issue of America's Humor (Chicago), some unsigned humorous material in the New Yorker, Whiz Bang,

Laughter (Philadelphia), The Country Gentleman (Philadelphia), The Country Humor (Chicago); and two articles, "Consider the Epigram", and "Greeting Card Tips", in Literature, Drama and Art (Little Falls, Minn.).

W. G. Mick, Toronto, Canada, is the author of the following articles which appeared within the past six months: "Holding the Best Men in Camp", in Canada Lumberman (Toronto); "Care of Machines", in Printer & Publisher (Toronto); "Building up a Rundown Business", in Canadian Stationer (Toronto); "Spacing Material Essential", in Printer & Publisher; "Guarding Quality on 'Clock' Machines", in Printing Review of Canada (Montreal); "Lumber or Substitutes—Which?", in Canada Lumberman (Toronto); "Dress Your Ads as Carefully as Your Windows", in Dry Goods Review (Toronto); "Immensity of Pulp Business", in United Church Publications (Toronto); "What Outfit Will I Need for a Prospecting Trip?", in Engineering & Mining Journal. The articles were published under a pseudonym.

The March issue of Boys and Girls Magazine, (Nashville, Tenn.) contained a story by Ivy H. Cox, Brookline, N. H., entitled "Betty Lou to the Rescue".

The first May number of Ace-High Magazine contained "Blaze Blewit, Badman", by James W. Egan, Tacoma, Wash., "Rawhide Plays the Good Samaritan", by Edgar Daniel Kramer, Baltimore, Md., and "The Code of King McKenzie", by J. R. Johnston, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Catherine Beach Ely, New York, in the April Current History Magazine, engages Floyd Dell in an interesting debate on the subject of whether the Mencken School of intellectuals are Traducing America; Miss Ely maintaining that they do and Mr. Dell coming to their defense. Both are extremely interesting and important contributions.

Florence Annette Wing, Los Angeles, Calif., is the author of a volume of poems entitled "Moon of the Desert", which has just been published by Harold Vinal (New York).

The "E.B." who signs the Spare Time column in Nash's Journal is Eleanor Bisbee, Cincinnati, Ohio.

"The Largest Locomotive", by Uriel B. Stokes, Denver, Colo., appeared in the March issue of St. Nicholas Magazine.

Earl Chapin May, Chicago, Ill., is author of an interview with Ed Baker, "The Hot Dog King", which appeared in Success Magazine for March.

"A Cowboy's Heaven", in the April issue of Cowboy Stories, is by S. Omar Barker, East Las Vegas, New Mexico.

Flora Playne Coltman, La Junta, Colo., had a very pleasing poem in the December issue of The American Needlewoman (Augusta, Maine), entitled "Just to be Eight".

"Black April", by Julia Peterkin, Fort Motto, S. C., recently published by Bobbs Merrill Company, Indianapolis, Ind., is a very unusual novel of negro life, for which the author has been much praised in the reviews.

Grace Brooks Popkins, Purcelville, Va., had a poem, "The Chapel Above Goose Creek", in the December number of The Virginia Churchman, and another poem, "The Spirit of the Oak" in a recent issue of The Grail (St. Meinrad, Ind.).

Katherine Hunter Coe, Cincinnati, Ohio, is author of the following: "Save Life by Knowing Poisons and their Antidotes", in the April issue of Today's Housewife; "Your Key in the Door", and "The Soul of You", two poems which appeared in Poets' Scroll (Talala, Okla.); "The Gift Supreme", a poem in the Cincinnati (Ohio) Times Star; a prose poem entitled "Impressions of the Rockies", in the April issue of The Lariat; and a poem, "The Price" in the British "Overseas Anthology".

Where to Sell

Every endeavor is made to secure accurate information regarding markets, but no guarantee is given of accuracy, nor is any responsibility assumed for operations based upon information given. Our readers are urgently asked to send information of new markets, suspensions, and prize contests.

PRIZE CONTESTS

Radio News, New York, is offering $300 in cash prizes for the most nearly correct lists of the 16 mistakes which occur in the cover of their May issue. The contest is open to anyone with the exception of the employees of the Experimenter Publishing Company and their families. Only one set of answers may be submitted by each contestant. Each mistake should be listed on a separate line, and numbered "1" to "16". Answers must be accompanied by not more than twenty-five words, which may be humorous, in reference to the subject of the picture. Contest closes June 18, 1927. All entries should be addressed to Editor "What's Wrong Picture", c/o Radio News, 230 Fifth Ave., New York City.

The Associated Glee Clubs of America will award a gold medal, and a cash award of $500 as the first prize, and a silver medal as the second prize, to the composer of the best male chorus composition submitted prior to December 1, 1927. It is to be for 4-part male chorus, either unaccompanied or with accompaniment of piano, or piano and organ, or piano with one or more string or wind instruments, obligato, but not with string, chamber or full orchestra. It is desired that the competition will bring forth original music that tells a story, paints a picture or expresses a mood or aspiration. A published composition may be submitted, provided it has not been issued prior to January 1, 1927. Four copies of each composition should be submitted to the Associated Glee Clubs of America, 113 West 57th St., New York City, and marked: "Attention of Judges of Prize Song." The name of the composer should not appear on the manuscript or printed copy, but should be given, with his address, in an accompanying letter. Title to the composition will remain in the composer but the Association will, if desired, assist the composer in securing its publication and will announce the award widely through the press and in its official bulletin. The judges will be Dr. Frank Damrosch, Ralph L. Baldwin, Dr. T. Tertius Noble, Carl Engel, and Peter W. Dykema.

The Associated Glee Clubs also announces a Song-Poem Contest open to all-comers. Prof. John Erskine, Robert Frost, and Marshall Bartholomew will be the judges in this contest. For the poem which, in the opinion of these men, is best adapted to musical setting, a prize of $100 will be awarded, in addition to the Association's honor medal. All poems must be submitted by December 1, 1927. They should be sent in triplicate, without identification, to the Associated Glee Clubs, 113 West 57th St., New York City, addressed to the "Judges of the Song-Poem Competition." The name of the writer should be enclosed in a sealed envelope.

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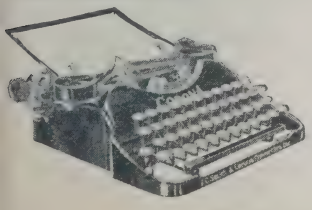

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best poem published in its pages during the year 1927. This includes the issues that have already appeared as well as future issues during 1927. The prize will be awarded by vote of a jury to be selected by the editors. All persons are eligible to submit poems, whether members of The Bookfellows or not; however, the selection of poems for publication will rest entirely with the editors. The award will be announced as soon after the close of the year 1927 as practicable. Poems must be typewritten, and will not be returned unless a stamped envelope, properly addressed, is sent with them. Poems published elsewhere are disqualified for the prize. All poems published in The Step Ladder during the year are automatically entered in the contest.

The Archer, a magazine published by the Society of Friends of Roerich Museum, offers a prize of $500 for the best short story between 3000 and 10,000 words in length. Stories must be unpublished and not offered for publication or other competitions while being considered for this contest. The stories may have been written originally in any language and may be submitted in English, French, Spanish, Italian, German, Russian, Swedish, Danish, or Norwegian. If written in languages other than these they must be translated into English. The quality most desired in these stories is an interpretation of life in its more permanent aspects, neither omitting nor unduly emphasizing the spiritual side. To be specific, stories ranging from Hawthorne to Bret Harte, from Tolstoi to Tchekhov, from Lafcadio Hearn to Selma Lagerlof will be in order. Stories should be typewritten with pages securely bound together and should be accompanied by self-addressed envelopes with return postage. The author's name should appear at the top of the first page. The editors of The Archer will be the sole judges of the contest. Stories which are useable will be purchased at regular rates, and authors who wish to set a minimum price on a story may put the amount under their names on the first page. Address: International Short Story Contest of The Archer, Charles Wharton Stork, Editor in Chief, Society of Friends of Roerich Museum, 310 Riverside Drive, New York City.

Sports Afield, Chicago, Ill., is conducting a $2000 Prize Fish Foto Contest, in which approximately five hundred prizes will be awarded. Anyone, excepting the judges and the members of the staff, may enter this contest. Photographs entered must show the artificial bait and the tackle used with which the catch was made. Photographs in black only are eligible, and should not exceed 5x7 inches in size. Photographs of any fish catch, no matter when caught, and complying with the rules of the contest, are eligible, with one exception—no picture can be entered which has won prizes in the previous contests held by the South Bend Bait Company. Entry blanks (appearing in every issue of Sports Afield or sent on request) should be completely filled out as directed and fastened to the photograph. Mail photograph, securely and carefully wrapped, to Fish Foto Contest, Sports Afield, 220 South State St., Chicago, Ill. Original films of photographs entered should be retained, as one of the contest rulings is that the films of the winning photographs become the property of the Sports Afield Publishing Co. It is understood upon entering the contest that full permission to use and publish any photograph entered is given to the Sports Afield Publishing Co. Pictures will be judged for photography—that is, for background, naturalness, human interest, and outdoor atmosphere; for the kind and size of the fish; for clearness and detail. More than one photograph may be submitted by any one person, but the same photograph can be entered only by one person. Contest ends at midnight, October 31, 1927.

The Etude Music Magazine, Philadelphia, Penn., announces the following awards in its contest for the best essays on "Why Every Child Should Have a Musical Training": First prize to Russell Snively Gilbert, second prize to Katharine

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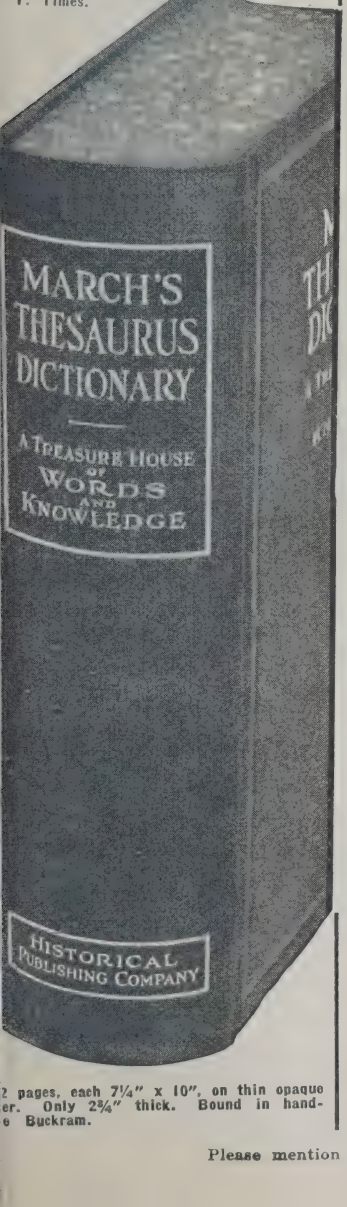

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Harrington, third prize, Mrs. Elizabeth W. DeHuff, fourth prize, Hilarion F. Rubio, fifth prize, Howard J. Hoste. There were also ten sixth prizes, and ten seventh prizes awarded.

Funk & Wagnalls, New York, announce that $500 reward for convincing proof of the identity of the author of the book, "The Yarn of a Yankee Privateer", was divided among four of the contestants, namely, William W. Hill, Boston; E. B. Steele, Boston; F. A. Emmerton, Cleveland; and Arthur R. Thompson, Hartford, Conn., all of whom submitted conclusive evidence that the book was written by one Benjamin Frederick Browne, of Salem.

Curtis Brown, Ltd., Literary Agents, New York, announce that the award in the prize competition which they handled for the organizers, Dodd Mead, Pictorial Review and First National Pictures, for a first novel, went to Mateel Farnham, for his novel "Rebellion", which was considered the most suitable for serialization in the Pictorial Review and for book publication by Dodd Mead & Company. It was not, however, a unanimous choice, as it did not contain suitable material for filming. The prize money could not, therefore, be given in full, but a substantial prize was given—$10,000 plus royalties.

Le Petit Theatre du Vieux Carre, New Orleans, La., announces the following awards in the C. H. Behre Prize Contest for one-act plays: First prize, $200, to Paul Green, Chapel Hill, N. C., for his play, "Supper for the Dead"; second prize, $100, to Natalie Scott, New Orleans, for her play, "The Spell of Gran' Zombi"; third prize, $50, to Harry McGuire, New Haven, Conn. All three plays were tragedies, and the first and second prize-winning plays deal with negro voodooism.

The Tanager, Grinnell, Iowa, announces that the prize of $25 for the best poem was awarded to Ruth Stokes, Algona, Iowa, for her poem, "Astonishment", which appeared in the March issue of The Tanager.

The Denver Post, Denver, Colo., will pay each week $10 to the author of the best editorial appearing on their "Open Range" page, $5.00 to the next best, and $1.00 each the next best five. Editorials should not be longer than 250 words—shorter would be better. Full name and address must be given, but initials only will be printed if requested. Write on one side of paper—use typewriter if possible. Do not submit poetry. Address editorials to Open Range, Denver Post, Denver, Colo.

MacLean's Magazine, Toronto, Canada, announces the following winners in its recent short-story contest: First prize of $500 to Lillian Beynon Thomas, Winnipeg, for her story "Five Cents for Luck"; second prize of $250 to R. V. Gery, Saskatchewan, for his story, "Alouette"; prizes of $125 each to Mazo de la Roche, Toronto, for "Good Friday", and Leslie McFarlane, Haileyburg, for "The Root House", and Special Mention to Alberta C. Trimble, for her story "Ex Nihilo Nihil Fit". Under the terms of the contest, a third prize of $150 and a fourth prize of $100 were offered. The judges, however, were unable to decide whether the story by Miss de la Roche, or the story by Mr. McFarlane should take precedent, so it was agreed unanimously that the fairest solution of the problem was to add the amounts of the third and fourth prizes and divide the total into two equal awards of $125.

Ozark Life, Kingston, Ark., is offering $50 in gold and three lot privileges in the Ozarkana Colony at Kingston for the best essays on the subject, "The Conscience of Ozark Life, and the Possibilities of Its Influence." Essays should be limited to 500 words. Name of the author should be written on a separate sheet and attached to the manuscript. There will be twelve prizes, and the twelve winning essays will be printed in the 1928

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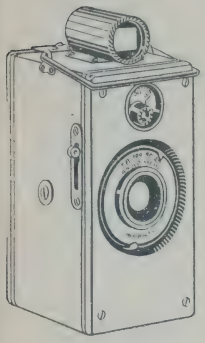

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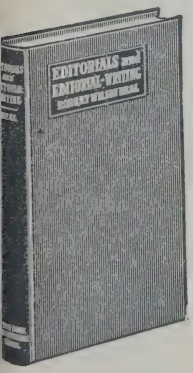

Editorials and Editorial Writing

By Robert Wilson Neal, A.M.

Foreword by Henry J. Haskell, The Kansas City Star

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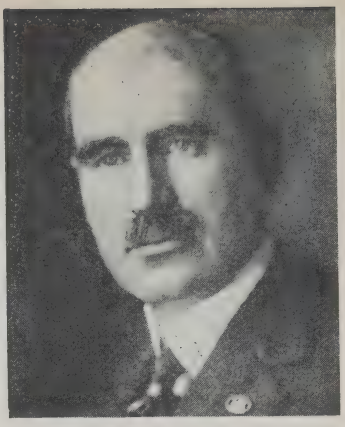

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issues of Ozark Life beginning with January. Contest closes December 31, 1927. Essays should be sent from August 1 to December 31 to the editor, Otto Ernest Rayburn, Kingston, Arkansas.

The following prize contests, alphabetically arranged, are still running. Full particulars have been given in previous issues, but details are repeated here.

Adventure, Spring and Macdougal Sts., New York, offers an annual prize of $100 for the best poem published by them during the year.

The American Arbitration Crusade, 114 East 31st St., New York, is conducting a campaign to arouse all peace-lovers to redoubled efforts to prevent war, and in order to stimulate interest the following prizes are offered: $100 for the best letter, editorial or article appearing in any publication having at least 5000 circulation; $100 for the best public demonstration or concerted endeavor for obligatory arbitration; $100 for the best slogan; $100 for the best cartoon; $100 for the best sermon. The main idea must be arbitration in each instance. All contests will close on July 4, 1927.

The American Magazine, 250 Park Ave., New York, offers a monthly prize contest for the best letters of not over 400 words on a given subject. Prizes are $30, $20 and $10. Subject changes each month. Contest closes the 20th of the month.

The Blue Book Magazine, 36 South State St., Chicago, Ill., offers five monthly prizes of $100 each for the best "actual fact" stories of true experiences in the following special fields—Adventure, Mystery, Business, Sport, Humor. Stories should not exceed 2000 words and should be shorter, if possible. Address contributions to True Experience Editor, The Blue Book Magazine.

Albert & Charles Boni Inc. offers a prize of $1000 for the best novel of Negro Life. The author must be of Negro descent. The novel must deal with Negro life in the sense that one or more of its leading characters must be of Negro descent and its action must show the influence of this fact. Only manuscripts of unpublished works, accompanied by the declaration of the author that the manuscript is submitted in competition for the prize will be considered. All manuscripts submitted in competition must be offered to Albert & Charles Boni Inc. for publication and the prize shall be in addition to and independent of the royalty to be arranged for in the usual way. No manuscript containing less than 30,000 words will be considered as a novel for the purpose of this competition, and preference will be given in general to works of full novel length. Closing date has been extended to July 1, 1927. Address all contributions to Albert & Charles Boni, Inc., 66 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

The Chattanooga Writers' Club announces the rules for the 1927 annual nature poem contest conducted by the club as the result of the establishment of a memorial prize fund, called the Elberta Clark Walker Fund. First prize, $20 for the best nature poem submitted, free to all entrants. Second prize, $10 for the best nature poem submitted by a Southern writer, living in the South. Poems must be original and unpublished. Poems shall not exceed seventy-two lines, but form and style shall be unrestricted. Author's name should not appear on the manuscript, but should be inclosed in a separate sealed envelope with the address. No manuscript shall be returned. Prize-winning poems shall become the property of the Writers' Club. The closing date will be November 1, 1927. Prizes will be awarded January 1, 1928. Contestants are requested not to ask for criticisms. Poems shall be sent to Miss Sarah Stansell, Contest Chairman, 2101 Duncan Avenue, Chattanooga, Tenn.

The Christian Century, 440 So. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill., is offering prizes

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of $50, $25, $15, and $10 for the best work appearing in their magazine for 1927.

The Crowell Publishing Company, as publishers of The Woman's Home Companion, and **The John Day Company, Inc.,** will award $50,000 in prizes for the two most interesting, well-written novels best adapted to serial and book publication. The Crowell Publishing Company will pay $20,000 for the winning novel written by a man, and a like sum for the winning novel written by a woman, for the first American serial rights. The John Day Company will pay $5000 for the United States and Canadian book rights of the winning novel written by a man, and a like sum for the winning novel written by a woman, as advance payment on account of royalties. A competitor may submit more than one manuscript, but each must be entered separately. All manuscripts submitted must be original unpublished works written in English. Translations will not be eligible. No manuscript containing less than 50,000 words should be submitted; preference will be given to manuscripts of full novel length. All manuscripts must be addressed to "Novel Competition," c/o The John Day Company, 25 West 45th St., New York City. A printed agreement, which will be sent on request, must be mailed in a sealed envelope marked "Novel Competition" at the same time the manuscript is submitted, together with sufficient postage for return of manuscript. Competition closes July 1, 1927.

The Echo, 1837 Champa St., Denver, Colo., announces four important awards: The Joseph Reed Award of $500 for short-stories used in The Echo; The Anual Campion Memorial Award of $1000 for fostering the pioneer spirit of the West; the Mrs. Venner Z. Reed Fund of $500 for the development of Art and Literature through The Echo; The Frank E. Kistler Award of $220 for the best Echo covers. All material printed in the magazine is automatically entered for the awards. All contributions should be sent to The Editors of The Echo, 1837 Champa St., Denver, Colo. Self-addressed, stamped envelopes should be enclosed, as no available manuscripts or drawings will be returned unless postage is sent.

A prize of $25 and three Honorable Mentions will be awarded in the **Frances Scott Key Contest** for the best patriotic song not over 24 lines. Three poems may be entered, the same never to have been published nor to be offered for publication until close of contest. Copies of poems sent should be kept as no manuscripts will be returned. Poems sent must be unsigned but accompanied by a separate piece of paper containing name and address of contestant and title of poem. Closing date August 30, 1927. Address, Leacy Naylor Green-Leach, 110 Morningside Drive, New York City.

Hart, Schaffner & Marx, Chicago, offer annually prizes amounting to $2000 for the best studies in the economic field. The prizes are divided as follows: Class A—first prize, $1000; second prize, $500. Class B—first prize, $300; second prize, $200. Class A includes any resident of the United States or Canada, without restriction. Class B includes only those who, at the time papers are sent in, are undergraduates of any American college. Subjects for studies are suggested, but any other subjects may be chosen, if approved by the Committee. Manuscripts should be inscribed with an assumed name, the class in which they are presented, and accompanied by a sealed envelope giving the real name and address of the competitor, together with any degrees or distinctions already obtained. If competitor is in Class B, the sealed envelope should contain the name of the institution in which he is studying. Contributions should be sent to J. Laurence Laughlin, University of Chicago, Chicago., Ill., on or before June 1, 1927. Further particulars and a list of subjects already approved by the Committee may be obtained from Mr. Laughlin.

Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce is offering four prizes for the best authentic historical pageants submitted, por-

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traying the history of Hot Springs dating from the arrival of the Spanish explorer, Ferdinand DeSoto, in 1541, to the present day. The pageant will be staged to celebrate the 100th birthday of Hot Springs National Park in 1932. The first prize consists of $1000 cash; second prize, a free trip to Hot Springs with hotel entertainment for two weeks; fourth prize, a free trip to Hot Springs with hotel entertainment for two weeks; third prize, free transportation to Hot Springs. No closing date has yet been announced. Address Centennial Celebration Club, P. O. Box 886, Hot Springs National Park, Ark.

Industrial Psychology Monthly will give an award of $100 in gold, and an Honorable Mention with $20 in gold for the best articles upon morale. The award will be preferably for a description of an actual experiment in developing morale; otherwise it will be given for the statement of a plan for such development. Morale is here considered as the mobilization of enthusiasm, interest, and energy on behalf of carrying out a corporate purpose. An individual or a group may submit proposals. The award is open to all competitors. Reports should be typewritten, triple spaced, of about 3000 words in length, and written in an interesting, practical, straightforward way for the business man. Each report is to be submitted under a pseudonym of three words. Accompanying each report will be a sealed envelope containing the key to the pseudonym. The judges reserve the right to publish all reports submitted. Contest closes October 1, 1927. Questions and contestants' reports should be directed to Morale Secretary, Industrial Psychology Monthly, Hamilton, N. Y.

The Infantry Journal, Washington, D. C., will award a prize of $1500 for the best music for "The Infantry Song". The object of the contest is to produce original music, in march time, that will be suitable for a song (with chorus) for the Infantry. The music should be simple, catchy and capable of being learned readily by the rank and file, and at the same time stirring and full of pep, but free from jazz. There is no limit on the number of entries submitted by any contestant. Citizens of the United States, or those who have declared their intentions to become citizens, are eligible. Manuscripts must be legibly written. The melody must be arranged for piano or for band. Words suggested for the song may accompany the music. Contestants will be required to subscribe to all conditions of the contest on approved form, furnished upon request by the Infantry Journal, Infantry Bldg., Washington, D. C., before entry or entries will be accepted. The usual rules concerning nom de plume will be adhered to. Contest closes at noon, July 1, 1927.

Life Cartoon Comedies, 598 Madison Ave., New York, will pay $50 for each scenario or idea they can use for their comedies, now being released by Educational Film Exchange, Inc. Each of these comedies is five hundred feet (above half a reel) in length, and is crammed with as many humorous ideas, or "gags", as can possibly be included in that limited space. Ideas do not have to be in scenario form, nor is it even necessary to work out a complete story. They will pay full rates for one humorous idea—one "gag" —that they can use. Manuscripts should not exceed five hundred words in length.

Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia offers $10,000 in prizes for Chamber Music Compositions. First prize, $5000; second prize, $3000; third prize, $2000. For compositions for from 3 to 6 instruments, the piano may be included as one of the instruments. Any composer may submit more than one composition and be awarded more than one prize. Any composer may submit compositions for the first prize only, if he so desires. The competition is open to persons of both sexes and of all nationalities. Both Score and Parts must be sent, each score must have written on its title page in ink, a nom de plume and be accompanied by a sealed envelope containing a paper with the composer's name and

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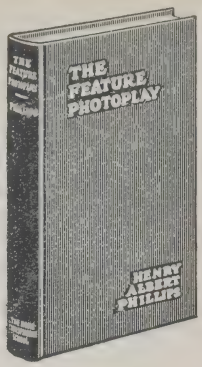

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address inside and the nom de plume on the outside. The name or the address of the composer must not appear elsewhere. The contest closes December 31, 1927, by which time all compositions must be in the hands of the Society. For further details write to the Secretary, 407 Sansom Street, Philadelphia, Penna.

People's Popular Monthly, Des Moines, Iowa, will award $10,000 in cash prizes for clean stories. $5000 will be awarded for first American serial rights of the best story between 60,000 and 80,000 words in length. $5000 will be paid in ten prizes of $500 each for first American rights of the ten best short stories between 6,000 and 10,000 words in length. All manuscripts that are to be returned must be accompanied by return postage, and should be plainly marked "Prize Story Contest." All stories must be clean and wholesome. The winning stories will be selected by the editors of People's Popular Monthly. All stories must reach the editor's office in Des Moines, on or before October 1st, 1927.

The Pioneer, 113 Tradd St., Statesville, N. C., announces the Ann Spencer Penn Poetry Contest, which has five classes open to residents of North Carolina. For the best thirty-two line lyric, a first prize of $10 and a second prize of $5; for the best descriptive poem of North Carolina scenery, a first prize of $10 and a second prize of $5; for the best sixteen-line lyric, and for the best Italian sonnet, a first prize of $5 each, and second prizes of $2.50 each; for the best twelve-line lyric, a first prize of $3.00, and a second prize of $2.00. Contests close July 1, 1927. Address all communications to the Editor of The Pioneer, 113 Tradd St., Statesville, N. C.

The Poetry Society will award $200 in prizes for the best poems about "Service, which is believed to represent the most stupendous of the ideals that have guided mankind through the ages." First prize, $100; second prize, $50; third prize, $25; fourth prize, $15. The six next best will receive honorary mention. Two prizes of $5 each and three honorary mentions will be awarded to the best published poems on the subject of Service from past or contemporary poets. The contest is open to all. Entries should be addressed to the Poetry Society, 280 Madison Ave., New York. No restrictions are imposed as to the form of poems that may be submitted, or to the aspect or aspects of this broad subject that may be treated. Poets can send as many poems as they wish. Contest closes June 15, 1927.

The Sixth annual **Alvan T. Simonds Economic Contest** offers a first prize of $1000, and a second prize of $500 for the best essays on the subject: "Who Ultimately Pays the Taxes?" The essays should be written in a popular style, to interest "the man on the street", the average person as well as the technical. They should not be less than 3000 words nor over 5000 words in length. The essays must be written in English, and preferably written on one side of the paper only. An assumed name should be at the head of each sheet. A sealed envelope, with the assumed name on the outside and containing the real name and address, should accompany each essay submitted. The essays must be original and not previously published, and must not be published nor used in any similar contest before the prizes in this contest are awarded. The prize-winning essays and the copyrights of them shall become the property of the donor upon payment of the prizes. Contest closes December 31, 1927. All communications should be addressed to the Contest Editor, Simonds Saw and Steel Company, 470 Main St., Fitchburg, Mass.

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True Story Magazine, 1926 Broadway, New York, is offering $10, $5 and $3 each month for the best letters stating why readers do or do not like the different features in each month's issue, and offering suggestions for improvement. Contest closes the 15th of each month. Address the Editor.

The United Daughters of the Confederacy is offering the Mrs. Simon Baruch University Prize of $1000 for an unpublished monograph or essay of high merit in the field of Southern history, preferably in or near the period of the Confederacy or bearing on the causes that led to the War Between the States. The competition is limited to undergraduates and graduate students of universities and standard colleges in the United States and those who have been students in such institutions within the preceding three years. If no essay of high merit shall be submitted the prize will not be awarded. It is expected that essays will comprise not less than 10,000 words and it is preferred that they be of considerably greater length. Essays must be sent before September 1, 1927, to Mrs. Arthur H. Jennings, Chairman, 2200 Rivermont Ave., Lynchburg, Va.

The Woodrow Wilson Foundation offers two Woodrow Wilson Awards of $25,000 each to the young men and young women of America for the two best articles of 2500 words on "What Woodrow Wilson Means to Me". The article is to be strictly confined to an exposition of Mr. Wilson's ideals and principles and what they mean to the writer. The Awards are available to any resident of the United States who has reached his or her twentieth birthday, and who has not passed his or her thirty-fifth birthday. An article may be submitted by an individual or jointly by a group or organization either existent or specially formed, provided the age limit of members is strictly observed. Such an article must be submitted in the name of the group or organization. A plain, sealed envelope attached to the manuscript must contain the full name and address of the contestant and an accompanying affidavit from father, mother, legal guardian, minister, employer or Notary Public that the contestant's age is not below 20 or above 35 years. For the purpose of correct correspondence, a woman contestant should indicate whether she is single or married. The article must be strictly original. No lengthy quotation must be included. All articles must be received at the office of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, on or before October 1, 1927, and must be carefully addressed to The Woodrow Wilson Foundation Award, 17 East 42nd St., New York City, New York.

Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn., publishes a Yale Series of Younger Poets, which is open to writers of American citizenship, who are under thirty years of age and have not previously published a volume of verse. Manuscripts for this competition are due May 1st and November 1st in each year. The best manuscript submitted in each competition is, if recommended by the Editor, published at the expense of the Yale University Press, the author receiving the usual 10% royalty on all copies sold in the United States. It is permissible to include poems previously published in periodicals or newspapers, if the consent of such journals is given for such publication. Contestants should address manuscripts and correspondence to the Editor, Yale Series of Younger Poets, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn.

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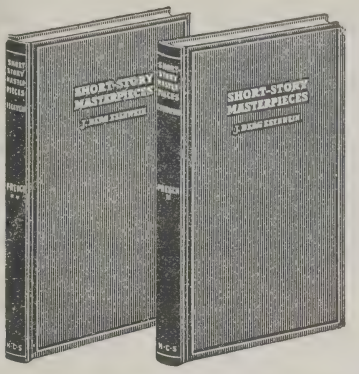

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SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

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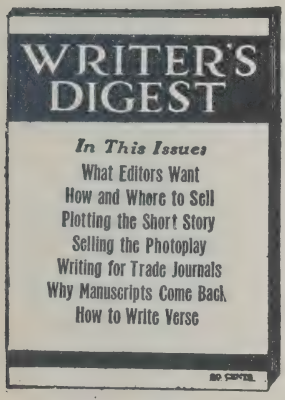

THE WRITER'S DIGEST is a monthly magazine that teaches how to write short stories, verse, song poems, photoplays, articles for trade journals, syndicated stories for newspapers—every form of literary composition.

The articles that fill this magazine every month are written by men and women who have arrived at the goal of success, and are telling you *how* it is done. Their inspiring messages, the helpful "how to" articles covering every phase of writing for profit, how and where to sell every kind of manuscript—all make the WRITER'S DIGEST indispensable to every writer, whether he or she is now on the high-road to success, or only an ambitious novice.

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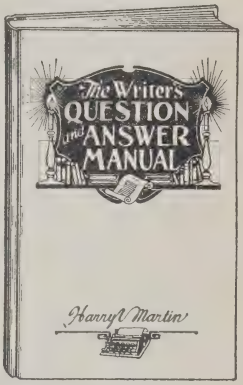
Selling the Photoplay
Living Your Characters



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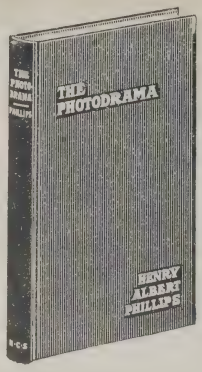

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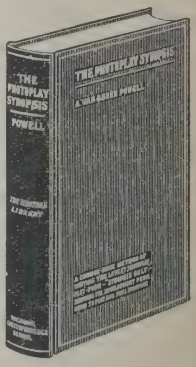

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The Writer's Library

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